

MAJOR BARBARA

A SCREEN VERSION

BY

BERNARD SHAW

PENGUIN BOOKS

HARMONDSWORTH MIDDLESEX

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N B

This screen version of *Major Barbara* is not practicable for stage performance. The greater resources of the film, both financial and artistic, make it possible to take the spectators through the great Undershaft factory and industrial colony instead of putting them off with a spoken description, and the same is true of half a dozen other scenes for which there is neither time nor money in theatres as distinct from cinemas.

The verses written to fit Rossini's once famous quartet from his *Moses in Egypt* were reset by Mr William Walton for Mr Pascal's film, but I retain my first suggestion partly to explain the constrained versification imposed by Rossini's music, partly because I must not infringe Mr Walton's copyright (Rossini's is extinct), and perhaps mainly because I feel sure that Undershaft was as old-fashioned in his musical taste as he was ultra-modern in his industrial management.

The passages quoted from Euripides are translated not by me, but by GILBERT MURRAY, whose English versions of the ancient Greek dramas had just come into our lives with all the impulsive power of original work shortly before *Major Barbara* was written. They tower above the best we were able to produce for ourselves in that period. My play stands indebted to Gilbert Murray in more ways than the way from Athens.

G B S

PREFACE TO MAJOR BARBARA

THE GOSPEL OF ST ANDREW UNDERSHAFT

IN the millionaire Undershaft I have represented a man who has become intellectually and spiritually as well as practically conscious of the irresistible natural truth which we all abhor and repudiate to wit, that the greatest of our evils, and the worst of our crimes is poverty, and that our first duty, to which every other consideration should be sacrificed, is not to be poor "Holy poverty," "poor but honest," "the respectable poor," and such phrases are as intolerable and as immoral as "drunken but amiable," "fraudulent but a good after-dinner speaker," "splendidly criminal," or the like Security, the chief pretence of civilization, cannot exist where the worst of dangers, the danger of poverty, hangs over everyone's head, and where the alleged protection of our persons from violence is only an accidental result of the existence of a police force whose real business is to force the poor man to see his children starve whilst the money that might feed and clothe them goes to overfeed pet dogs

It is difficult to make people realize that an evil is an evil For instance, we seize a man and deliberately do him a malicious injury say, imprison him for years One would not suppose that it needed any exceptional clearness of wit to recognize in this an act of diabolical cruelty But in England such a recognition provokes a stare of surprise, followed by an explanation that the outrage is punishment or justice or something else that is all right, or perhaps by a heated attempt to argue that we should all be robbed and murdered in our beds if such stupid villainies as sentences of imprisonment were not committed daily It is useless to argue that even if this were true, which it is not, the alternative to adding crimes of our own to the crimes from which we suffer is not helpless submission Chicken-pox is an evil, but if I were to declare that we must either submit to it or else repress it sternly by seizing everyone who suffers from it and punishing them by inoculation

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with smallpox, I should be laughed at , for though nobody could deny that the result would be to prevent chickenpox to some extent by making people avoid it much more carefully, and to effect a further apparent prevention by making them conceal it very anxiously, yet people would have sense enough to see that the deliberate propagation of smallpox was a creation of evil, and must therefore be ruled out in favor of purely humane and hygienic measures Yet in the precisely parallel case of a man breaking into my house and stealing my wife's diamonds I am expected as a matter of course to steal ten years of his life, torturing him all the time If he tries to defeat that monstrous retaliation by shooting me, my survivors hang him The net result suggested by the police statistics is that we inflict atrocious injuries on the burglars we catch in order to make the rest take effectual precautions against detection , so that instead of saving our wives' diamonds from burglary we only greatly decrease our chances of ever getting them back, and increase our chances of being shot by the robber if we are unlucky enough to disturb him at his work

But the thoughtless wickedness with which we scatter sentences of imprisonment, torture in the solitary cell and on the plank bed, privation of human intercourse and daily news, and flogging, on moral invalids and energetic rebels, is as nothing compared to the silly levity with which we tolerate poverty as if it were either a wholesome tonic for lazy people or else a virtue to be embraced as St Francis embraced it. If a man is indolent, let him be poor If he is drunken, let him be poor , If he is not a gentleman, let him be poor. If he is addicted to the fine arts or to pure science instead of to trade and finance, let him be poor If he chooses to spend his wages on his beer and his family instead of saving it up for his old age, let him be poor Let nothing be done for "the undeserving" let him be poor Serve him right ! Also—somewhat inconsistently—blessed are the poor !

Now what does this Let Him Be Poor mean ? It means let him be weak Let him be ignorant Let him become a nucleus of disease. Let him be a standing exhibition and

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example of ugliness and dirt Let him have rickety children. Let him be cheap, and drag his fellows down to his own price by selling himself to do their work. Let his habitations turn our cities into poisonous congeries of slums Let his daughters infect our young men with the diseases of the streets, and his sons revenge him by turning the nation's manhood into scrofula, cowardice, cruelty, hypocrisy, political imbecility, and all the other fruits of oppression and malnutrition Let the undeserving become still less deserving ; and let the deserving lay up for himself, not treasures in heaven, but horrors in hell upon earth This being so, is it really wise to let him be poor ? Would he not do ten times less harm as a prosperous burglar, incendiary, ravisher or murderer, to the utmost limits of humanity's comparatively negligible impulses in these directions ? Suppose we were to abolish all penalties for such activities, and decide that poverty is the one thing we will not tolerate—that every adult with less than a thousand a year shall be painlessly but inexorably killed, and every hungry half naked child forcibly fattened and clothed, would not that be an enormous improvement on our existing system, which has already destroyed so many civilizations, and is visibly destroying ours ? Surely the sensible course would be to give every man enough to live well on, so as to guarantee the community against the possibility of a case of the malignant disease of poverty, and then (necessarily) to see that he earned it

Undershaft, the hero of *Major Barbara*, is a man who, having grasped the fact that poverty is a crime, knows that when society offered him the alternative of poverty or a lucrative trade in death and destruction, it offered him, not a choice between opulent villainy and humble virtue, but between energetic enterprise and cowardly infamy His conduct stands the Kantian test, which Peter Shirley's does not Peter Shirley is what we call the honest poor man. Undershaft is what we call the wicked rich one Shirley is Lazarus, Undershaft Dives Well, the misery of the world is due to the fact that the great mass of men act and believe as Peter Shirley acts and believes

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If they acted and believed as Undershaft acts and believes, the immediate result would be a revolution of incalculable beneficence. To have money, says Undershaft, is with me a point of honor for which I am prepared to kill to make my own life worth living. This preparedness is, as he says, the final test of sincerity. Like Froissart's medieval hero, who saw that "to rob and pill was a good life" he is not the dupe of that public sentiment against killing which is propagated and endowed by people who but for it would be killed themselves, or of the mouth-honor paid to poverty and obedience by rich and insubordinate parasites who want to rob the poor without courage and command them without superiority. Froissart's knight, in placing the achievement of a good life before all the other duties—which indeed are not duties at all when they conflict with it, but plain wickednesses—behaved bravely, admirably, and, in the final analysis, public-spiritedly. Medieval society, on the other hand, behaved very badly indeed in organizing itself so stupidly that a good life could be achieved by robbing and pilling. If the knight's contemporaries had been all as resolute as he, robbing and pilling would have been the shortest way to the gallows, just as, if we were all as resolute and clear-sighted as Undershaft, an attempt to live by means of what is called "an independent income" would be the shortest way to the lethal chamber. But as, thanks to our political ignorance and personal cowardice (fruits of poverty, both), the best imitation of a good life now procurable is life on an independent income, all sensible people aim at securing such an income, and are, of course, careful to legalize and moralize both it and all the actions and sentiments which lead to it and support it as an institution. What else can they do? They know, of course, that they are rich because others are poor. But they cannot help that. It is for the poor to repudiate poverty when they have had enough of it. The thing can be done easily enough. The demonstrations to the contrary made by the economists, jurists, moralists and sentimentalists hired by the rich to defend them, or even doing the work gratuitously out of sheer folly and abjectness, impose only on those

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who have leisure to read, and want to be imposed on.

The reason why the independent income-tax payers are not solid in defence of their position is that the poverty of those we rob prevents our having the good life for which we sacrifice them. Rich men or aristocrats with a developed sense of life—men like Ruskin and William Morris and Kropotkin—have enormous social appetites and very fastidious personal ones. They are not content with handsome houses, they want handsome cities. They are not content with bediamonded wives and blooming daughters, they complain because the charwoman is badly dressed, because the laundress smells of gin, because the sempstress is anemic, because every man they meet is not a friend and every woman not a romance. They turn up their noses at their neighbor's drains, and are made ill by the architecture of their neighbor's house. Trade patterns made to suit vulgar people do not please them, and they can get nothing else. The very air is not good enough for them, there is too much factory smoke in it. They even demand abstract conditions—justice, honor, a healthy moral atmosphere, an honest nexus to replace the cash nexus. Finally they declare that though to rob and pill with your own hand on horseback and in steel coat may have been a good life, to rob and pill by the hands of the policeman, the bailiff and the soldier, and to underpay them meanly for doing it, is not a good life, but rather fatal to all possibility of even a tolerable one. They call on the poor to revolt, and, finding the poor shocked at their ungentlemanliness, despairingly revile them for their "damned wantlessness" (*verdamnte Bedürfnislosigkeit*).

So far, however, their attack on society has lacked simplicity. The poor do not share their tastes, nor understand their art-criticisms, nor want the simple life, the aesthetic life, the literate life. On the contrary, they want very much to wallow in all the costly vulgarities from which the elect souls among the rich turn away with loathing. It is by surfeit and not by abstinence that they will be cured of their hankering after unwholesome sweets. What they do dislike and are ashamed of is their poverty. To

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ask them to fight for the difference between the Picture Post and the Kelmscott Chaucer is silly . they prefer the Post " Cease to be slaves, in order that you may become cranks " is not a very inspiring call to arms , nor is it really improved by substituting saints for cranks Both terms denote men of genius ; and the common man does not want to live the life of a saint or a man of genius But he does want more money. Whatever else he may be vague about, he is clear about that He may or may not prefer Major Barbara to the Drury Lane pantomime , but he always prefers a pound to five shillings

Now to deplore this preference as sordid, and teach children that it is sinful to desire money, is to strain towards the extreme limit of impudence in lying and corruption in hypocrisy The universal regard for money is the one hopeful fact in our civilization, the one sound spot in our social conscience Money is the most important thing in the world It represents health, strength, honor, generosity and beauty as conspicuously and undeniably as the want of it represents illness, weakness, disgrace, meanness and ugliness Not the least of its virtues is that it destroys base people as certainly as it fortifies and dignifies noble people It is only when it is cheapened to worthlessness for some and made impossibly dear to others, that it becomes a curse In short, it is a curse only in such foolish social conditions that life itself is a curse For the two things are inseparable . money is the counter that enables life to be distributed socially . it is life as truly as gold coins and bank notes are money The first duty of every citizen is to insist on having money on reasonable terms , and this demand is not complied with by giving four men a few shillings each for ten or twelve hours' drudgery and one man a thousand pounds for nothing The crying need of the nation is not for better morals, cheaper bread, temperance, liberty, culture, redemption of fallen sisters and erring brothers, nor the grace, love and fellowship of the Trinity, but simply for enough money And the evil to be attacked is not sin, suffering, greed, priestcraft, kingcraft, demagoguery, monopoly, ignorance,

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drink, war, pestilence, nor any of the other consequences of poverty, but just poverty itself

Once take your eyes from the ends of the earth and fix them on this truth just under your nose, and Andrew Undershaft's views will not perplex you in the least. Unless indeed his constant sense that he is only the instrument of a Will or Life Force which uses him for purposes wider than his own, may puzzle you. If so, that is because you are walking either in artificial Darwinian darkness, or in mere stupidity. All genuinely religious people have that consciousness. To them Undershaft the Mystic will be quite intelligible, and his perfect comprehension of his daughter the Salvationist and her lover the Euripidean Republican natural and inevitable. This, however, is not new, even on the stage. What is new, as far as I know, is that article in Undershaft's religion which recognizes in Money the first need, and in poverty the vilest sin of man and society.

This dramatic conception has not, of course, been reached in one step. Nor has it been borrowed from Nietzsche nor from any man born beyond the Channel. The late Samuel Butler, in his own department the greatest English writer of the latter half of the XIX century, steadily inculcated the necessity and morality of a conscientious Laodiceanism in religion and of an earnest and constant sense of the importance of money. It drives one almost to despair of English literature that when I produced plays in which Butler's extraordinarily fresh, free and future-piercing suggestions had an obvious share, I was reproached for echoing Schopenhauer, Ibsen, and Nietzsche. Really, the English do not deserve to have great men. They allowed Butler to die practically unknown whilst in Sicily there was already a Via Samuele Butler. When English tourists came upon it they asked either "Who the devil was Samuele Butler?" or wondered why the Sicilians should perpetuate the memory of the author of *Hudibras*.

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THE SALVATION ARMY

When Major Barbara was produced in London, the second act was reported in an important northern newspaper as a withering attack on the Salvation Army, and the despairing ejaculation of Barbara deplored by a London daily as a tasteless blasphemy. And they were set right, not by the professed critics of the theatre, but by religious and philosophical publicists who not only understood the act as well as the Salvationists themselves, but also saw it in its relation to the religious life of the nation. a life which then lay not only outside the sympathy of many theatre critics, but outside their knowledge of society. Indeed nothing could be more ironically curious than the confrontation Major Barbara effected of the theatre enthusiasts with the religious enthusiasts. On the one hand was the playgoer, always seeking pleasure, paying exorbitantly for it, suffering unbearable discomforts for it, and not always getting it. On the other hand was the Salvationist, repudiating gaiety, courting effort and sacrifice, yet always in the wildest spirits, laughing, joking, singing, rejoicing, drumming, and tambourining. his life flying by in a flash of excitement, and his death arriving as a climax of triumph. And, if you please, the playgoer despising the Salvationist as a joyless person, shut out from the heaven of the theatre, self-condemned to a life of hideous gloom, and the Salvationist mourning over the playgoer as over a prodigal with vine leaves in his hair, careering outrageously to hell amid the popping of champagne corks and the ribald laughter of sirens! Could misunderstanding be more complete, or sympathy worse misplaced?

Fortunately, the Salvationists are more accessible to the religious character of the drama than the playgoers to the gay energy and artistic fertility of religion. They can see, when it is pointed out to them, that a theatre, as a place where two or three are gathered together, takes from that divine presence an inalienable sanctity of which the grossest and profanest farce can no more deprive it than a hypocritical sermon by a snobbish bishop can desecrate West-

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minster Abbey But in our professional playgoers this indispensable preliminary conception of sanctity seems wanting They talk of actors as mimes and mummery, and, I fear, think of playwrights as liars and pandars whose main business is the voluptuous soothing of the tired city speculator when what he calls the serious business of the day is over Passion, the life of drama, means nothing to them but primitive sexual excitement such phrases as "impassioned poetry" or "passionate love of truth" have fallen quite out of their vocabulary and been replaced by "passional crime" and the like They assume, as far as I can gather, that people in whom passion has a larger scope are passionless and therefore uninteresting Consequently they come to think of religious people either as figures of fun or as hypocrites, bores, and spoilsports. And so, when Barbara cracks Salvation Army jokes, and snatches a kiss from her lover across his drum, the devotees of the theatre think they ought to appear shocked, and conclude that the whole play is an elaborate mockery of the Army And then either hypocritically rebuke me for mocking, or foolishly take part in the supposed mockery'

Even the handful of mentally competent critics got into difficulties over my demonstration of the economic deadlock in which the Salvation Army finds itself Some of them thought that the Army would not have taken money from a distiller and a cannon founder others thought it should not have taken it all assumed more or less definitely that it reduced itself to absurdity or hypocrisy by taking it On the first point the reply of the Army itself was prompt and conclusive As one of its officers said, they would take money from the devil himself and be only too glad to get it out of his hands and into God's They gratefully acknowledged that publicans not only give them money but allow them to collect it in the bar, sometimes even when there is a Salvation meeting outside preaching teetotalism In fact, they questioned the verisimilitude of the play, not because Mrs Baines took the money, but because Barbara refused it

On the point that the Army ought not to take such

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money, its justification is obvious. It must take the money because it cannot exist without money, and there is no other money to be had. Practically all the spare money in the country consists of a mass of rent, interest, and profit, every penny of which is bound up with crime, drink, prostitution, disease, and all the evil fruits of poverty, as inextricably as with enterprise, wealth, commercial probity, and national prosperity. The notion that you can earmark certain coins as tainted is childish. None the less the fact that all our money is tainted gives a very severe shock to earnest young souls when some dramatic instance of the taint first makes them conscious of it. When an enthusiastic young clergyman of the Established Church first realizes that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners receive the rents of sporting public houses, brothels, and sweating dens, or that the most generous contributor at his last charity sermon was an employer trading in female labor cheapened by prostitution, or that the only patron who can afford to rebuild his church or his schools or give his boys' brigade a gymnasium or a library is the son-in-law of a Chicago meat King, that young clergyman has, like Barbara, a very bad quarter hour. But he cannot help himself by refusing to accept money from anybody except sweet old ladies with independent incomes and gentle and lovely ways of life. He has only to follow up the income of the sweet ladies to its industrial source, and there he will find Mrs Warren's profession and all the rest of it. His own stipend has the same root. He must either share the world's guilt or go to another planet. He must save the world's honor if he is to save his own. This is what all the Churches find just as the Salvation Army and Barbara find it in the play. Her discovery is that she is her father's accomplice, that the Salvation Army is the accomplice of the distiller and the dynamite maker, that they can no more escape one another than they can escape the air they breathe, and that there is no salvation for them through personal righteousness, but only through the redemption of the whole nation from its vicious, lazy, competitive anarchy. Nevertheless we proceed without the

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least misgiving as to the elevation of our private characters, the purity of our private atmospheres, and our right to repudiate as foreign to ourselves the coarse depravity of the garret and the slum. Not that we mean any harm. we only desire to be, in our little private way, ladies and gentlemen. We do not understand Barbara's lesson because we have not, like her, learnt it by taking our part in the larger life of the nation.

BARBARA'S RETURN TO THE COLORS

Barbara's return to the colors may yet provide a subject for the dramatic historian of the future. To go back to the Salvation Army with the knowledge that even the Salvationists themselves are not saved yet, that poverty is not blessed, but a most damnable sin, and that when General Booth chose Blood and Fire for the emblem of Salvation instead of the Cross, he was perhaps better inspired than he knew. Such knowledge, for the daughter of Andrew Undershaft, will clearly lead to something hopefuller than distributing bread and treacle at the expense of Bodger.

It is a very significant thing, this instinctive choice of the military form of organization, this substitution of the drum for the organ, by the Salvation Army. Does it not suggest that the Salvationists divine that they must actually fight the devil instead of merely praying at him? At present, it is true, they have not quite ascertained his correct address. When they do, they may give a very rude shock to that sense of security which he has gained from his experience of the fact that hard words, even when uttered by eloquent essayists and lecturers, or carried unanimously at enthusiastic public meetings on the motion of eminent reformers, break no bones. It has been said that the French Revolution was the work of Voltaire, Rousseau and the Encyclopedists. It seems to me to have been the work of men who had observed that virtuous indignation, caustic criticism, conclusive argument, and instructive pamphleteering, even when done by the most earnest and witty literary geniuses,

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were as useless as praying, things going steadily from bad to worse whilst Rousseau's Social Contract and the pamphlets of Voltaire were at the height of their vogue. Eventually, as we know, perfectly respectable citizens and earnest philanthropists connived at the September massacres because hard experience had convinced them that if they contented themselves with appeals to humanity and patriotism, the aristocracy, though it would read their appeals with the greatest enjoyment and appreciation, flattering and admiring the writers, would none the less continue to conspire with foreign monarchists to undo the revolution and restore the old system with every circumstance of savage vengeance and ruthless repression of popular liberties.

The nineteenth century saw the same lesson repeated in England. It had its Utilitarians, its Christian Socialists, its Fabians (still extant) it had Bentham, Mill, Dickens, Ruskin, Carlyle, Butler, Henry George, and Morris. And the end of all their efforts is the Chicago described by Mr Upton Sinclair, and the London in which the people who pay to be amused by my dramatic representation of Peter Shirley turned out to starve at forty because there are younger slaves to be had for his wages, do not take, and have not the slightest intention of taking, any effective step to organize society in such a way as to make that everyday infamy impossible. I, who have preached and pamphleteered like any Encyclopedist, have to confess that my methods are no use, and would be no use if I were Voltaire, Rousseau, Shelley, Bentham, Marx, Mill, Dickens, Carlyle, Ruskin, Butler, and Morris all rolled into one, with Euripides, Erasmus, More, Montaigne, Moliere, Beaumarchais, Swift, Goethe, Wagner, Ibsen, Tolstoy, Jesus and the prophets all thrown in (as indeed in some sort I actually am, standing as I do on all their shoulders). The problem being to make heroes out of cowards, we paper apostles and artist-magicians have succeeded only in giving cowards all the sensations of heroes whilst they tolerate every abomination, accept every plunder, and submit to every oppression. Christianity, in making a merit of such submission, has marked only that depth in the abyss at which

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the very sense of shame is lost The Christian has been like Dickens' doctor in the debtor's prison, who tells the newcomer of its ineffable peace and security . no duns, no tyrannical collectors of rates and taxes, no importunate hopes nor exacting duties, nothing but the rest and safety of having no farther to fall

Yet in the poorest corner of this soul-destroying Christendom vitality suddenly begins to germinate again Joyousness, a sacred gift long dethroned by the hellish laughter of derision and obscenity, rises like a flood miraculously out of the fetid dust and mud of the slums ; rousing marches and impetuous dithyrambs rise to the heavens from people among whom the depressing noise called "sacred music" is a standing joke , a flag with Blood and Fire on it is unfurled, not in murderous rancor, but because fire is beautiful and blood a vital and splendid red , Fear, which we flatter by calling Self, vanishes , and transfigured men and women carry their gospel through a transfigured world, calling their leader General, themselves captains and brigadiers, and their whole body an Army : praying, but praying only for refreshment, for strength to fight, and for needful MONEY (a notable sign, that) , preaching, but not preaching submission , daring ill-usage and abuse, but not putting up with more of it than is inevitable , and practising what the world will let them practise, including soap and water, color and music There is danger in such activity , and where there is danger there is hope Our present security is nothing, and can be nothing, but evil made irresistible

WEAKNESSES OF THE SALVATION ARMY

For the present, however, it is not my business to flatter the Salvation Army Rather must I point out to it that it has almost as many weaknesses as the Church of England itself It is building up a business organization which will compel it eventually to see that its original staffs of enthusiast-commanders shall be succeeded by a bureaucracy of men of business That has always happened sooner or later

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to great orders founded by saints , and the order founded by Saint William Booth will not escape the same danger It is even more dependent than the Church on rich people who would cut off supplies at once if it began to preach a revolt against poverty which must also be a revolt against riches It is hampered by a heavy contingent of pious elders who are not really Salvationists at all, but Evangelicals of the old school It still "sticks to Moses," which is flat nonsense at this time of day if it means, as I am afraid it does, that the Book of Genesis contains a trustworthy scientific account of the origin of species, and that the god to whom Jephthah sacrificed his daughter is any less obviously a tribal idol than Dagon or Chemosh

Further, there is still too much other-worldliness about the Army Like Frederick's grenadier, the Salvationist wants to live for ever (the most monstrous way of crying for the moon) , and though it is evident to anyone who has ever heard General Booth and his best officers that they would work as hard for human salvation as they do at present if they believed that death would be the end of them individually, they and their followers have a bad habit of talking as if the Salvationists were heroically enduring a very bad time on earth as an investment which will bring them in dividends later on in the form, not of a better life to come for the whole world, but of an eternity spent by themselves personally in a sort of bliss which would bore any active person to a second death Surely the truth is that the Salvationists are unusually happy people And is it not the very diagnostic of true salvation that it shall overcome the fear of death ? Now the man who has come to believe that there is no such thing as death, the change so called being merely the transition to an exquisitely happy and utterly careless life, has not overcome the fear of death at all on the contrary, it has overcome him so completely that he refuses to die on any terms whatever I do not call a Salvationist really saved until he is ready to lie down cheerfully on the scrap heap, having paid scot and lot and something over, and let his eternal life pass on to renew its youth in the battalions of the future

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Then there is the nasty lying habit called confession, which the Army encourages because it lends itself to dramatic oratory, with plenty of thrilling incident. For my part, when I hear a convert relating the violences and oaths and blasphemies he was guilty of before he was saved, making out that he was a very terrible fellow then and is the most contrite and chastened of Christians now, I believe him no more than I believe the millionaire who says he came up to London or Chicago as a boy with only three half-pence in his pocket. Salvationists have said to me that Barbara in my play would never have been taken in by so transparent a humbug as Snobby Price, and certainly I do not think Snobby could have taken in any experienced Salvationist on a point on which the Salvationist did not wish to be taken in. But on the point of conversion all Salvationists wish to be taken in, for the more obvious the sinner the more obvious the miracle of his conversion. When converted burglars and reclaimed drunkards are the attractions at an experience meeting, the burglars can hardly be too burglarious or the drunkards too drunken. As long as such attractions are relied on, you will have your Snobbies claiming to have beaten their mothers when they were as a matter of prosaic fact habitually beaten by them, and your Rummies of the tamest respectability pretending to a past of reckless and dazzling vice. Even when confessions are sincerely autobiographic we should beware of assuming that the impulse to make them was pious or that the interest of the hearers is wholesome. As well might we assume that the poor people who insist on shewing disgusting ulcers to district visitors are convinced hygienists, or that the curiosity which sometimes welcomes such exhibitions is a pleasant and creditable one. One is often tempted to suggest that those who pester our police superintendents with confessions of murder might very wisely be taken at their word and executed, except in the few cases in which a real murderer is seeking to be relieved of his guilt by confession and expiation. For though I am not, I hope an unmerciful person, I do not think that the inexorability of the deed once done should be disguised by any ritual

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whether in the confessional or on the scaffold

And here my disagreement with the Salvation Army, and with all propagandists of the Cross (which I loathe as I loathe all gibbets) becomes deep indeed. Forgiveness, absolution, atonement, are figments. Punishment is only a pretence of cancelling one crime by another, and we can no more have forgiveness without vindictiveness than a cure without a disease. We shall never get a high morality from people who conceive that their misdeeds are revocable and pardonable, nor in a society where absolution and expiation are officially provided for us all. The demand may be very real, but the supply is spurious.

Thus Bill Walker, in my play, having assaulted the Salvation Lass, presently finds himself overwhelmed with an intolerable conviction of sin under the skilled treatment of Barbara. Straightway he begins to try to unassault the lass and deruffianize his deed, first by getting punished for it in kind, and, when that relief is denied him, by fining himself a pound to compensate the girl. He is foiled both ways. He finds the Salvation Army as inexorable as the facts. It will not punish him. It will not take his money. It will not tolerate a redeemed ruffian. It leaves him no means of salvation except ceasing to be a ruffian. In doing this, the Salvation Army instinctively grasps the central truth of Christianity and discards its central superstition, that central truth being the vanity of revenge and punishment, and that central superstition the salvation of the world by the gibbet.

For, be it noted, Bill has assaulted an old and starving woman also, and for this worse offence he feels no remorse whatever, because she makes it clear that her malice is as great as his own. "Let her have the law of me, as she said she would," says Bill. "What I done to her is no more on what you might call my conscience than sticking a pig." This shews a perfectly natural and wholesome state of mind on his part. The old woman, like the law she threatens him with, is perfectly ready to play the game of retaliation with him. To rob him if he steals, to flog him if he strikes, to murder him if he kills. By example and precept the law

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and public opinion teach him to impose his will on others by anger, violence, and cruelty, and to wipe off the moral score by punishment. That is sound Crosstianity. But this Crosstianity has got entangled with something which Barbara calls Christianity, and which unexpectedly causes her to refuse to play the hangman's game of Satan casting out Satan. She refuses to prosecute a drunken ruffian; she converses on equal terms with a blackguard to whom no lady should be seen speaking in the public street. In short, she imitates Christ. Bill's conscience reacts to this just as naturally as it does to the old woman's threats. He is placed in a position of unbearable moral inferiority, and strives by every means in his power to escape from it, whilst he is still quite ready to meet the abuse of the old woman by attempting to smash a mug on her face. And that is the triumphant justification of Barbara's Christianity as against our system of judicial punishment and the vindictive villain-thrashings and "poetic justice" of the romantic stage.

For the credit of literature it must be pointed out that the situation is only partly novel. Victor Hugo long ago gave us the epic of the convict and the bishop's candlesticks, of the Crosstian policeman annihilated by his encounter with the Christian Valjean. But Bill Walker is not, like Valjean, romantically changed from a demon into an angel. There are millions of Bill Walkers in all classes of society today, and the point which I, as a professor of natural psychology, desire to demonstrate, is that Bill, without any change in his character or circumstances whatsoever, will react one way to one sort of treatment and another way to another.

In proof I might point to the sensational object lesson provided by our commercial millionaires today. They begin as brigands—merciless, unscrupulous, dealing out ruin and death and slavery to their competitors and employees, and facing desperately the worst that their competitors can do to them. The history of the English factories, the American Trusts, the exploitation of African gold, diamonds, ivory and rubber, outdoes in villainy the worst that has ever

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been imagined of the buccaneers of the Spanish Main. Captain Kidd would have marooned a modern Trust magnate for conduct unworthy of a gentleman of fortune. The law every day seizes on scoundrels who are not capitalists and punishes them with a cruelty worse than their own, with the result that they come out of the torture house more dangerous than they went in, and renew their evil doing (nobody will employ them at anything else) until they are again seized, again tormented, and again let loose, with the same result.

But the moneyed scoundrel is dealt with very differently, and very Christianly. He is not only forgiven—he is idolized, respected, made much of, all but worshipped. Society returns him good for evil in the most extravagant overmeasure. And with what result? He begins to idolize himself, to respect himself, to live up to the treatment he receives. He preaches sermons, he writes books of the most edifying advice to young men, actually persuading himself that he got on by taking his own advice, he endows educational institutions, he supports charities, he dies finally in the odor of sanctity, leaving a will which is a monument of public spirit and bounty. And all this without any change in his character. The spots of the leopard and the stripes of the tiger are as brilliant as ever, but the conduct of the world towards him has changed, and his conduct has changed accordingly. You have only to reverse your attitude towards him, to lay hands on his property, revile him, torture him, and he will be a brigand again in a moment, as ready to crush you as you are to crush him, and quite as full of pretentious moral reasons for doing it.

In short, when Major Barbara says that there are no scoundrels, she is right—there are no absolute scoundrels, though there are intolerable people of whom I shall treat presently. Every reasonable man (and woman) is a potential scoundrel and a potential good citizen. Whatever his character, what he does, and what we think of what he does, depend mostly on how we treat him. The characteristics that ruin a citizen in one class make him eminent in another.

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The characters that behave differently in different circumstances behave alike in similar circumstances. Take a common English character like that of Bill Walker. We meet Bill everywhere on the judicial bench, on the episcopal bench, in the Privy Council, at the War Office and Admiralty, as well as in the Old Bailey dock or in the ranks of casual unskilled labor. And the morality of Bill's characteristics varies with these various circumstances. The faults of the burglar are the qualities of the financier the manners and habits of a duke would cost a city clerk his situation. In short, though character is independent of circumstances, conduct is not, and our moral judgments of character are not both are circumstantial. Take any condition of life in which the circumstances are for a mass of men practically alike prison, the peelage, the army, the factory, the stables, the gipsy encampment or where you please! In spite of diversity of character and temperament, the conduct and morals of the individuals in each group are as predicable and as alike in the main as if they were a flock of sheep, morals being mostly only social habits and circumstantial necessities. Strong people know this and count upon it. In nothing have the master-minds of the world been distinguished from the ordinary suburban season-ticket holder more than in their straightforward perception of the fact that mankind in the lump is a single species, and not a menagerie of gentlemen and bounders, villains and heroes, cowards and daredevils, peers and peasants, shopkeepers and aristocrats, artisans and laborers, washerwomen and duchesses, in which all the grades of income and caste represent distinct animals who must not be introduced to one another or intermarry. Napoleon constructing a galaxy of generals and courtiers, and even of monarchs, out of his collection of social nobodies; Julius Cæsar appointing as governor of Egypt the son of a freedman who but a short time before would have been legally disqualified for the post even of a private soldier in the Roman army, Louis XI making his barber his privy councillor all these had in their different ways a firm hold of the scientific fact

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of human equality, expressed by Barbara in the Christian formula that all men are children of one father. No use declaring that all men are born free if we deny that they are born good. Guarantee a man's goodness and his liberty will take care of itself. To guarantee his freedom on condition that we approve of his moral character is formally to abolish all freedom whatsoever, as every man's liberty is at the mercy of moral indictments which any bigot can trump up against everyone who violates custom, whether as a prophet or as a rascal. This is the lesson Democracy has to learn before it can become anything but the most oppressive of all the priesthoods.

Let us now return to Bill Walker and his case of conscience against the Salvation Army. Major Barbara, not being a modern Tetzl, or the treasurer of a hospital, refuses to sell absolution to Bill for a pound sterling. Unfortunately, what the Army can afford to refuse to Bill Walker, it cannot refuse to Bodger. Bodger is master of the situation because he holds the purse strings. "Strive as you will" says Bodger, in effect. "I mean you cannot do without. You cannot save Bill Walker without my money." And the Army answers, quite rightly under the circumstances. "We will take money from the devil himself sooner than abandon the work of Salvation." So Bodger pays his conscience-money and gets the absolution that is refused to Bill. In real life Bill would perhaps never know this. But I, the dramatist whose business it is to shew the connexion between things that seem apart and unrelated in the haphazard order of events in real life, have contrived to make it known to Bill, with the result that the Salvation Army loses its hold of him at once.

But Bill may not be lost, for all that. He is still in the grip of the facts and of his own conscience, and may find his taste for blackguardism permanently spoiled. Still, I cannot guarantee that happy ending. Walk through the poorer quarters of our cities on Sunday when the men are not working, but resting and chewing the cud of their reflections. You will find one expression common to every mature face. the expression of cynicism. The discovery

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made by Bill Walker about the Salvation Army has been made by everyone there. They have found that every man has his price, and they have been foolishly or corruptly taught to mistrust and despise him for that necessary and salutary condition of social existence. When they learn that General Booth, too, has his price, they do not admire him because it is a high one, and admit the need of organizing society so that he shall get it in an honorable way; they conclude that his character is unsound and that all religious men are hypocrites and allies of their sweaters and oppressors. They know that the large subscriptions which help to support the Army are endowments, not of religion, but of the wicked doctrine of docility in poverty and humility under oppression, and they are rent by the most agonizing of all the doubts of the soul, the doubt whether their true salvation must not come from their most abhorrent passions, from murder, envy, greed, stubbornness, rage, and terrorism, rather than from public spirit, reasonableness, humanity, generosity, tenderness, delicacy, pity and kindness. The confirmation of that doubt, at which our newspapers have been working so hard for years past, is the morality of militarism, and the justification of militarism is that circumstances may at any time make it the true morality of the moment. This, which I wrote before 1914, has been most bloodily confirmed by two world wars.

At such moments it becomes the duty of the Churches to rally their congregations against the existing order. But if they do this, the existing order must forcibly suppress them. Churches are suffered to exist only on condition that they preach submission to the State as at present capitalistically organized. The Church of England itself is compelled to add to the thirtysix articles in which it formulates its religious tenets, three more in which it apologetically protests that the moment any of these articles comes in conflict with the State it is to be entirely renounced, abjured, violated, abrogated and abhorred, the policeman being a much more important person than any of the Persons of the Trinity. And this is why no tolerated Church

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nor Salvation Army can ever win the entire confidence of the poor. It must be on the side of the police and the military, no matter what it believes or disbelieves, and as the police and the military are the instruments by which the rich rob and oppress the poor (on legal and moral principles made for the purpose), it is not possible to be on the side of the poor and of the police at the same time. Indeed the religious bodies, as the almoners of the rich, become a sort of auxiliary police, taking off the insurrectionary edge of poverty with coals and blankets, bread and treacle, soothing and cheering the victims with hopes of immense and inexpensive happiness in another world when the process of working them to premature death in the service of the rich is complete in this.

CHRISTIANITY AND ANARCHISM

Such is the false position from which neither the Salvation Army nor the Church of England nor any other religious organization whatever can escape except through a reconstitution of society. Nor can they merely endure the State passively, washing their hands of its sins. The State is constantly forcing the consciences of men by violence and cruelty. Not content with exacting money from us for the maintenance of its soldiers and policemen, its gaolers and executioners, it forces us to take an active personal part in its proceedings on pain of becoming ourselves the victims of its violence. As I wrote these lines forty years ago a sensational example was given to the world. A royal marriage had been celebrated, first by sacrament in a cathedral, and then by a bullfight having for its main amusement the spectacle of horses gored and disembowelled by the bull, after which, when the bull was so exhausted as to be no longer dangerous, he was killed by a cautious matador. But the ironic contrast between the bullfight and the sacrament of marriage does not move anyone. Another contrast—that between the splendor, the happiness, the atmosphere of kindly admiration surrounding the young couple, and the price paid for it under our abominable

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social arrangements in the misery, squalor and degradation of millions of other young couples—was drawn at the same moment by an American novelist, Mr Upton Sinclair, who chipped a corner of the veneering from the huge meat packing industries of Chicago, and shewed it to us as a sample of what is going on all over the world underneath the top layer of prosperous plutocracy. One man was sufficiently moved by that contrast to pay his own life as the price of one terrible blow at the responsible parties. His poverty left him ignorant enough to be duped by the pretence that the innocent young bride and bridegroom, put forth and crowned by plutocracy as the heads of a State in which they had less personal power than any policeman, and less influence than any Chairman of a Trust, were responsible. At them accordingly he launched his six-pennorth of fulminate, missing his mark, but scattering the bowels of as many horses as any bull in the arena, and slaying twentythree persons, besides wounding ninety-nine. And of all these, the horses alone were innocent of the guilt he was avenging. Had he blown all Madrid to atoms with every adult person in it, not one could have escaped the charge of being an accessory, before, at, and after the facts, to poverty and prostitution, to such wholesale massacre of infants as Herod never dreamt of, to plague, pestilence and famine, battle, murder and lingering death. Perhaps not one who had not helped, through example, precept, connivance, and even clamor, to teach the dynamiter his well-learned gospel of hatred and vengeance, by approving every day of sentences of years of imprisonment so infernal in their unnatural stupidity and panic-stricken cruelty, that their advocates can disavow neither the dagger nor the bomb without stripping the mask of justice and humanity from themselves also.

At that very moment there appeared the biography of one of our dukes, who, being a Scot, could argue about politics, and therefore stood out as a great brain among our aristocrats. And what, if you please, was his Grace's favorite historical episode, which he declared he never read without intense satisfaction? Why, the young General

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Bonaparte's pounding of the Paris mob to pieces in 1795, called in playful approval by our respectable classes "the whiff of grapeshot," though Napoleon, to do him justice, took a deeper view of it, and would fain have had it forgotten. And since the Duke was not a demon, but a man of like passions with ourselves, by no means rancorous or cruel as men go, who can doubt that all over the world proletarians of the ducal kidney revelled in "the whiff of dynamite" (the flavor of the joke seems to evaporate a little, does it not?) because it was aimed at the class they hate even as our argute duke hated what he called the mob?

In such an atmosphere there could be only one sequel to the Madrid explosion. All Europe burned to emulate it. Vengeance! More blood! Tear "the Anarchist beast" to shreds. Drag him to the scaffold. Imprison him for life. Let all civilized States band together to drive his like off the face of the earth, and if any State refuses to join, make war on it. This time the leading London newspaper, then anti-Liberal and therefore anti-Tsarist in politics, did not say "Serve you right" to the victims, as it did, in effect, when Bobrikoff, and De Plehve, and Grand Duke Sergius, were in the same manner unofficially fulminated into fragments. No, fulminate our rivals in Asia by all means, ye brave Russian revolutionaries, but to aim at an English princess! monstrous! hideous! hound down the wretch to his doom, and observe, please, that we are a civilized and merciful people, and, however much we may regret it, must not treat him as Ravailac, Damiens, and our regicides of 1649 were treated.

Strangely enough, in the midst of this raging fire of malice, the one man who still had faith in the kindness and intelligence of human nature was the fulminator, a hunted wretch, with nothing, apparently, to secure his triumph over all the prisons and scaffolds of infuriate Europe except the revolver in his pocket and his readiness to discharge it at a moment's notice into his own head. Think of him setting out to find a gentleman and a Christian in the multitude of human wolves howling for his blood. Think also

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of this that at the very first essay he found what he sought : a veritable grandee of Spain, a noble, high-thinking, unterrified, malice-void soul, in the guise—of all masquerades in the world !—of a modern editor The Anarchist wolf, flying from the wolves of plutocracy, threw himself on the honor of the man The man, not being a wolf (nor a London editor), and therefore not having enough sympathy with his exploit to be made bloodthirsty by it, did not throw him back to the pursuing wolves—gave him, instead, what help he could to escape, and sent him off acquainted at last with a force that goes deeper than dynamite, though you cannot buy so much of it for sixpence That righteous and honorable high human deed was not wasted on Europe, let us hope, though it benefited the fugitive wolf for a moment only The plutocratic wolves presently smelt him out The fugitive shot the unlucky wolf whose nose was nearest , shot himself , and then convinced the world, by his photograph, that he was no monstrous freak of reversion to the tiger, but a good looking young man with nothing abnormal about him except his appalling courage and resolution (that is why the terrified shrieked Coward at him) one to whom murdering a happy young couple on their wedding morning would have been an unthinkably unnatural abomination under rational and kindly human circumstances

Then comes the climax of irony and blind stupidity The wolves, balked of their meal of fellow-wolf, turn on the Samaritan man, and proceed to torture him, after their manner, by imprisonment, for refusing to fasten his teeth in the throat of the dynamiter and hold him down until they came to finish him

Thus, you see, a man may not be a gentleman nowadays even if he wishes to As to being a Christian, he is allowed some latitude in that matter, because, I repeat, Christianity has two faces Popular Christianity has for its emblem a gibbet , for its chief sensation a sanguinary execution after torture , for its central mystery an insane vengeance bought off by a trumpety expiation But there is a nobler and profounder Christianity which affirms the sacred mystery

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of Equality, and forbids the glaring futility and folly of vengeance, often politely called punishment or justice. The gibbet part of Christianity is tolerated. The other is criminal felony. Connoisseurs in irony are well aware of the fact that the only editor in England who denounced punishment as radically wrong, also repudiated Christianity, called his paper *The Freethinker*, and was imprisoned for a year for "bad taste" under the law against blasphemy.

SANE CONCLUSIONS

And now I must ask the excited reader not to lose his head on one side or the other, but to draw a sane moral from these grim absurdities. It is not good sense to propose that laws against crime should apply to principals only and not to accessories whose consent, counsel, or silence may secure impunity to the principal. If you institute punishment as part of the law, you must punish people for refusing to punish. If you have a police, part of its duty must be to compel everybody to assist the police. No doubt if your laws are unjust, and your policemen agents of oppression, the result will be an unbearable violation of the private consciences of citizens. But that cannot be helped. the remedy is, not to license everybody to thwart the law if they please, but to make laws that will command the public assent, and not to deal cruelly and stupidly with law-breakers. Everybody disapproves of burglars, but the modern burglar, when caught and overpowered by a householder, sometimes appeals, often, let us hope, with success, to his captor not to deliver him over to the useless horrors of penal servitude. In other cases the lawbreaker escapes because those who could give him up do not consider his breach of the law a guilty action. Private tribunals are formed in opposition to the official tribunals, and these private tribunals employ assassins as executioners, as was done, for example, by Mahomet before he had established his power officially, and by the Ribbon lodges of Ireland in their long struggle with the landlords. Under such circumstances, the assassin goes free although everybody in

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the district knows who he is and what he has done. They do not betray him, partly because they justify him exactly as the regular Government justifies its official executioner, and partly because they would themselves be assassinated if they betrayed him. another method learnt from the official government. Given a tribunal employing a slayer who has no personal quarrel with the slain, and there is clearly no moral difference between official and unofficial killing.

In short, all men are anarchists with regard to laws which are against their consciences, either in the preamble or in the penalty. In London our worst anarchists are the magistrates, because many of them are so old and ignorant that when they are called upon to administer any law that is based on ideas or knowledge less than half a century old, they disagree with it, and being mere ordinary homebred private Englishmen without any respect for law except in the abstract, naively set the example of violating it. In this instance the man lags behind the law, but when the law lags behind the man, he becomes equally an anarchist. When some huge change in social conditions, such as the industrial revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, throws our legal and industrial institutions out of date, Anarchism becomes almost a religion. The whole force of the most energetic geniuses of the time in philosophy, economics, and art, concentrates itself on demonstrations and reminders that morality and law are only conventions, fallible and continually obsolescing. Tragedies in which the heroes are bandits, and comedies in which law-abiding and conventionally moral folk are compelled to satirize themselves by outraging the conscience of the spectators every time they do their duty, appear simultaneously with economic treatises entitled "What is Property? Theft!" and with histories of "The Conflict between Religion and Science."

Now this is not a healthy state of things. The advantages of living in society are proportionate, not to the freedom of the individual from a code, but to the complexity and subtlety of the code he is prepared not only to accept but

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to uphold as a matter of such vital importance that a law-breaker at large is hardly to be tolerated on any plea. Such an attitude becomes impossible when the only men who can make themselves heard and remembered throughout the world spend all their energy in raising our gorge against current law, current morality, current respectability, and legal property. The ordinary man, uneducated in social theory even when he is schooled in Latin verse, cannot be set against all the laws of his country and yet persuaded to regard law in the abstract as vitally necessary to society. Once he is brought to repudiate the laws and institutions he knows, he will repudiate the very conception of law and the very groundwork of institutions, ridiculing human rights, extolling brainless methods as "historical," and tolerating nothing except opportunist empiricism in conduct, with dynamite as the basis of politics and vivisection as the basis of science. That is hideous, but what is to be done? Here am I, for instance, by class a respectable man, by common sense a hater of waste and disorder, by intellectual constitution legally minded to the verge of pedantry, and by temperament apprehensive and economically disposed to the limit of old-maidishness, yet I am, and have always been, and shall now always be, a revolutionary writer, because our laws make law impossible, our liberties destroy all freedom, our property is organized robbery, our morality is an impudent hypocrisy, our wisdom is administered by inexperienced or mal-experienced dupes, our power wielded by cowards and weaklings, and our honor false in all its points. I am an enemy of the existing order for good reasons, but that does not make my attacks any less encouraging or helpful to people who are its enemies for bad reasons. I cannot help that, even if I could see what worse we could do than we are already doing. And society, with all its prisons and bayonets and whips and ostracisms and starvations, is powerless in the face of the Anarchist who is prepared to sacrifice his own life in the battle with it. Our natural safety from the cheap and devastating explosives which anybody can make, and every conscript learns to handle, lies in the fact that brave and resolute

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men, when they are rascals, will not risk their skins for the good of humanity, and, when they are not, are sympathetic enough to care for humanity, abhorring murder, and never committing it until their consciences are outraged beyond endurance. The remedy is, then, simply not to outrage their consciences.

Do not be afraid that they will not make allowances. All men make very large allowances indeed before they stake their own lives in a war to the death with society. Nobody demands or expects the millennium. But there are two things that must be set right, or we shall perish, like Rome, of soul atrophy disguised as empire.

The first is, that the daily ceremony of dividing the wealth of the country among its inhabitants shall be so conducted that no crumb shall, save as a criminal's ration, go to any able-bodied adults who are not producing by their personal exertions not only a full equivalent for what they take, but a surplus sufficient to provide for their superannuation and pay back the debt due for their nurture.

The second is that the deliberate infliction of malicious injuries which now goes on under the name of punishment be abandoned, so that the thief, the ruffian, the gambler, and the beggar, may without inhumanity be handed over to the law, and made to understand that a State which is too humane to punish will also be too thrifty to waste the life of honest men in watching or restraining dishonest ones. That is why we do not imprison dogs. We even take our chance of their first bite. But if a dog delights to bark and bite, it goes to the lethal chamber. That seems to me sensible. To allow the dog to expiate his bite by a period of torment, and then let him loose in a much more savage condition (for the chain makes a dog savage) to bite again and expiate again, having meanwhile spent a great deal of human life and happiness in the task of chaining and feeding and tormenting him, seems to me idiotic and superstitious. Yet that is what we do to men who bark and bite and steal. It would be far more sensible to put up with their vices, as we put up with their illnesses, until they give more trouble than they are worth, at which point we should,

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with many apologies and expressions of sympathy, and some generosity in complying with their last wishes, place them in the lethal chamber and get rid of them. Under no circumstances should they be allowed to expiate their misdeeds by a manufactured penalty, to subscribe to a charity, or to compensate the victims. If there is to be no punishment there can be no forgiveness. We shall never have real moral responsibility until everyone knows that his deeds are irrevocable, and that his life depends on his usefulness. Hitherto, alas ! humanity has never dared face these hard facts. We frantically scatter conscience money and invent systems of conscience banking, with expiatory penalties, atonements, redemptions, salvations, hospital subscription lists and what not, to enable us to contract-out of the moral code. Not content with the old scapegoat and sacrificial lamb, we deify human saviors, and pray to miraculous virgin intercessors. We attribute mercy to the inexorable ; soothe our consciences after committing murder by throwing ourselves on the bosom of divine love , and shrink even from our own gallows because we are forced to admit that it, at least, is irrevocable—as if one hour of imprisonment were not as irrevocable as any execution !

If a man cannot look evil in the face without illusion, he will never know what it really is, or combat it effectually. The few men who have been able (relatively) to do this have been called cynics, and have sometimes had an abnormal share of evil in themselves, corresponding to the abnormal strength of their minds , but they have never done mischief unless they intended to do it. That is why great scoundrels have been beneficent rulers whilst amiable and privately harmless monarchs have ruined their countries by trusting to the hocus-pocus of innocence and guilt, reward and punishment, virtuous indignation and pardon, instead of standing up to the facts without either malice or mercy. Major Barbara stands up to Bill Walker in that way, with the result that the ruffian who cannot get hated, has to hate himself. To relieve this agony he tries to get punished , but the Salvationist whom he tries to provoke is as merciless as Barbara, and only prays for him. Then

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he tries to pay, but can get nobody to take his money. His doom is the doom of Cain, who, failing to find either a savior, a policeman, or an almoner to help him to pretend that his brother's blood no longer cried from the ground, had to live and die a murderer. Cain took care not to commit another murder, unlike our railway shareholders (I am one) who kill and maim shunters by hundreds to save the cost of automatic couplings, and make atonement by annual subscriptions to deserving charities. Had Cain been allowed to pay off his score, he might possibly have killed Adam and Eve for the mere sake of a second luxurious reconciliation with God afterwards. Bodger, you may depend on it, will go on to the end of his life poisoning people with whisky, because he can always depend on the Salvation Army or the Church of England to negotiate a redemption for him in consideration of a trifling percentage of his profits.

There is a third condition too, which must be fulfilled before the great teachers of the world will cease to scoff at its religions. Creeds must become intellectually honest. At present there is not a single credible established religion in the world. That is perhaps the most stupendous fact in the whole world-situation. This play of mine, Major Barbara, is, I hope, both true and inspired, but whoever says that it all happened, and that faith in it and understanding of it consist in believing that it is a record of an actual occurrence, is, to speak according to Scripture, a fool and a liar, and is hereby solemnly denounced and cursed as such by me, the author, to all posterity.

London, June 1906

Revised, April 1944

in Ayot Saint Lawrence

PROLOGUE

Sunday morning in an open space at the East End of London. Bitter winter weather. A placard seven feet high stands beside an empty packing case upside down, with a reading desk in front of it. The two forming a tribune for a speaker. With this equipment a desperately small meeting is being addressed, or rather read to, by a young university don in spectacles, very smart in a new overcoat and spotless muffler, supported by a few undergraduates, male and female, very cold, and all trying not to look dispirited by their failure to attract the public, which consists of one policeman on duty and three or four East End workers waiting for the public houses to open, and deciding very doubtfully that the lecture to which they are listening is better than no entertainment at all. The scene is extremely depressing.

The placard is inscribed in the largest letters UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION OPEN AIR MEETINGS UNDER THE AUSPICES
OF THE WORKERS' EDUCATION ASSOCIATION FIVE
STAGES OF GREEK RELIGION LECTURER
ADOLPHUS CUSINS D.C.L., LITT.D., REGIUS
PROFESSOR OF GREEK IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
ALL SUNDAY MORNINGS IN FEBRUARY

CUSINS [*reading with very distinct articulation but not looking at his audience*] The ancient Greeks considered it unseemly to give public praise to women for their good looks, but apparently thought it did no harm to young men. Note that, unlike our own popular playwrights in England and the United States, the great Athenians scorned what we call love interest and regarded sex appeal as indecent.

A BYSTANDER S'truth! [*He shrugs his shoulders and moves off*]

CUSINS Listen to the words put into the mouth of Aeschylus by Aristophanes. He boasts of how he made the Greeks crave

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Like lions to dash at the face of the foe, and leap to
the call of the trumpet

But no Sthenobolia I have given you, no : no Phaedra,
no heroine strumpet.

If I have once put a woman in love in one act of
one play may my teaching be scouted—

*He is interrupted by the strains of a Salvation Army band
playing a brisk march Instantly the three remaining
East Enders brighten up and hurry away in the direction
of the sound*

CUSINS [*giving up in despair and thrusting his MS into his
pocket*] No use [*He descends from his platform and
addresses himself to the police officer while his friends
pack up the tribune and dismount the placard*] I am
afraid this open air experiment is no good. Or else I
havnt the knack of attracting an audience If it hadnt
been for you I expect they would have stoned me. I
am afraid I must have bored you terribly

POLICEMAN [*civil and respectful*] Oh no, sir no no. Only
it sounded a bit heathenish at first, almost as if you
believed in them queer old gods : I talked to my missus
about it You see, sir, she's keen on the Salvation
Army, and likes good serious talk But when you said
that morning that God was there all along, whatever
they called him, I knew it was all right

CUSINS I never thought much of myself as a speaker , but
I have never lost my whole audience before

POLICEMAN Not at all, sir . I have heard worse But there
are two things that no speaker can stand up against

CUSINS And what are they, may I ask ?

POLICEMAN One is a band the other is a fight. The
Salvation Army knows that . it always has a band
And this Sunday theres a special attraction Theres
Major Barbara

CUSINS Major Barbara ! How can a woman be a major ?

POLICEMAN. She can, sir, in the army, or a sergeant, or a
colonel, or even a general. If you want a tip or two as
to how to gather a meeting and hold it you might do
worse than follow that band to the Salvation Barracks

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and hear her take the Sunday service

CUSINS. Egad, I will I have a fancy for collecting religious experiences Which way?

POLICEMAN. Come with me, sir. I'm off duty now that your meeting is over

*They go off together to the exterior of the Salvation Barracks
The meeting inside is overflowing into the doorway, which
is crowded*

CUSINS It's full up. We cant get in.

POLICEMAN I can, sir Keep close behind me [*He pushes
into the crowd*] Now then. by your leave This
gentleman is on business By your leave

*They push through to the interior of the hall. Room is made
for them silently at the end of one of the forms Barbara
is on the platform speaking Whilst she speaks Cusins'
face shews that he is fascinated and keenly interested by
Barbara herself, though not, like the rest, by what she is
saying.*

BARBARA Amid all the poverty and ugliness of our lives here, the sin and the suffering, the grime and the smoke, the toil and the struggle, you know, and I know, that God is with us always and everywhere We do not need a cathedral to worship Him in Here in this old shed no less than beneath God's open sky we can draw nearer to Him Some of you feel Him near you even now, and feel, too, how much you need Him Wont you let Him come into your life now, today, as so many have done before? You want His strength, His guidance, His comfort - you need His forgiveness and friendship Some of you turn away from Him in bitterness at the hardship of your lives, saying that you do not want God you want happiness and beauty God will give you both. There is no beauty like the beauty of the newly saved who has found the unspeakable happiness that only the consciousness of God's presence and love can give We in the Army have our daily trials. Most of us are as poor as you are But we are all happy, and the mark of that happiness is on us for you to see The rich are not happy. The poor

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have only to reach out their hands for God's happiness and take it Is there anyone here who has courage enough to raise his hand as a sign that he would like us to pray for him? Make the decision now in your need and loneliness God is waiting for you Someone here must feel that he should raise his hand, but that it isn't easy It is the easiest thing in the world: he has often done it to beckon to his child or to stop a tram He feels too shy perhaps Never mind I will pray for him, and God will give him the courage of a lion Come do not keep God waiting thousands have done it, and if you can find me one who has done it and been sorry afterwards I will put off this dear uniform and never pray again Come come! I know there is someone [*Scanning their faces along the row her look meets that of Cusins His hand shoots up instantly*] Ah! I have found him Let the brave gentleman come to the front make room for him, please [*Cusins passes up, all staring at him*] Give me your hand, my brother I will take you to our little room for confession where we will pray together Friends you will sing "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds!"

They rise and sing while she leads Cusins out through a side door into a small cloakroom, with overcoats hanging up and a table heaped with women's outdoor belongings Along the table is a form, the only sitting accommodation in the place Barbara sits and places Cusins beside her

BARBARA Now before we pray a little together, may I tell you to forget that we have never met before You must not be shy and distant with me I can see that all's well with you I can see in your face the new happiness that has just come into your life You are a new man you are saved You feel that, don't you?

CUSINS [*grimly determined*] Listen to me, Major Barbara I am here on false pretences It is true that a new happiness has come into my life a happiness that I have never quite believed in—that at any rate I thought would never come into my life. It has come.

BARBARA Thank God!

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CUSINS Take care It has not made me a better man : it has made me an utterly unscrupulous one

BARBARA What do you mean ?

CUSINS Look at me Look deep into my eyes Is the new happiness that you see there the kind of happiness you are thinking of ?

BARBARA [*looking hard*] It must be There is no other happiness like it It gladdens my heart because, under God, I have brought it there

CUSINS Good Now let me warn you that though I am a scholar and a gentleman I am as poor as a church mouse, like all scholars I am no good for anything in the way of worldly success

BARBARA Oh, what does that matter ? We are all poor here We never think of money or success When all our money is spent on the Army we pray for more , and it comes it always comes Take your mind off such things And now, shall we pray together ?

CUSINS I never pray—at least not in your way The new thing that has come to me is not that I am saved I was saved when I was five years old, when I first swallowed your religion Since then I have swallowed twenty religions that is my life's work I know all their catchwords They are nothing to me . I am interested in the essence of all religions, not in their catchwords or in yours

BARBARA Let us find it for you here We can

CUSINS Nonsense ! I have more to teach you about religion than you can yet imagine

BARBARA You think so Then why have you come here with me ? Why did you hold up your hand ?

CUSINS Because I have impulses that I cannot explain They come very seldom But when they come, nothing can stop me There is an end of my conscience, of my prudence, of my reason Such an impulse seized me the moment I saw you You are poor , you are ignorant , our table manners are different , our relatives will not mix , everything is against our associating with one another No matter . to be with you I will

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join the Army I will put on the uniform and beat the drum · in short, I am hopelessly and for ever in love with you and will follow you to the end of the world until you marry me Is that plain ?

BARBARA [*rising, calm and greatly amused*] Perfectly And now will you begin by seeing me home ? I should like to put you through your first trial by shewing you where I live and introducing you to my family

CUSINS I do not care where you live , and I will face ten families for you

BARBARA [*putting on her cloak and gathering her bag*] So you shall God has some little surprises for you, my friend. Come

They go out by a door which leads to an alley beside the building, where they can sidetrack the crowd

CUSINS Have we far to go ? What about a taxi ?

BARBARA We dont run to taxis in this part of the world Most of us here have never been in one We must walk to a tram.

They go off accordingly to a tram-stop in a main east end thoroughfare

BARBARA Here we are Look out for a number 23

CUSINS But we are on the wrong side, are we not ? This is the side for the trams going west

BARBARA. We are going west

CUSINS Oh, I beg pardon Where do you live ?

BARBARA In a place called Wilton Crescent.

CUSINS Quite a fashionable address. I did not know that there is a Wilton Crescent at the east end The only one I know is at Hyde Park Corner close to Belgrave Square Where all the dukes and eails live. Have you ever been as far west as Hyde Park Corner ?

BARBARA Occasionally. I know the Wilton Crescent you mean I live there

CUSINS But—but—but—

BARBARA Why not ? Plenty of poor people live there How do you know that I am not a scullery maid ? Here is number 23. [*She runs to the tram-car to secure a seat*]. Jump in

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They get into the car. It drives off, and in due course they arrive on the doorstep of the house in Wilton Crescent.

CUSINS I ring the servants' bell, I suppose. Had I not better leave you before they open?

BARBARA. Dont ring I have a latchkey [*She produces it*]

CUSINS By the way, I had better know your name before I go in

BARBARA You have not mentioned yours And it is I who have to introduce you

CUSINS My name is Adolphus Cusins.

BARBARA Adolphus! What a name! I shall call you Dolly

CUSINS My relatives do I wish they didnt Introduce me as Professor Cusins

BARBARA Allude to me as Miss Undershaft

CUSINS [*thunderstruck*] Undershaft!!! The Cannon King! The rival of Krupp and of Skoda! The multi-millionaire!!!

BARBARA Do not faint, Dolly I have not seen him since I was that high [*indicating a height of about three feet*]. You will find my mother, Lady Britomart Undershaft, much more terrifying [*She unlocks the door and goes in*]

CUSINS So this is one of the little surprises you promised! Heaven help me! [*He goes in; and the door closes behind them*]

So ends the prologue. The story begins some weeks later in her boudoir upstairs, where Lady Britomart Undershaft sits at her writing table after dinner. A large and comfortable settee is in the middle of the room with a copy of The Speaker, a Liberal weekly journal, on it. A person sitting on it (it is vacant at present) would have, on his right, the writing table, with the lady herself busy at it; the heavily curtained windows on his left with a smaller writing-table and an armchair near them; the door behind him towards his right; and additional sitting accommodation for half a dozen persons

Lady Britomart is a mature governing class aristocrat, well dressed and yet careless of her dress, well bred and

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quite reckless of her breeding, well mannered and yet appallingly outspoken and indifferent to the opinion of her interlocutors, amiable and yet peremptory, arbitrary, and high-tempered to the last bearable degree, and withal a very typical managing matron of the upper class, treated as a naughty child until she grew into a scolding mother, and finally settling down with plenty of practical ability and worldly experience, limited in the oddest way with domestic and class limitations, conceiving the universe exactly as if it were a large house in Wilton Crescent, though handling her corner of it very effectively on that assumption, and being quite enlightened and liberal as to the books in the library, the pictures on the walls, the music in the portfolios, and the articles in the papers

Her son Stephen comes in He is a gravely correct young man, taking himself very seriously, and, though still in some awe of his mother from childish habit and bachelor shyness, quite untroubled by doubts or diffidence

STEPHEN Whats the matter?

LADY BRITOMART Presently, Stephen

Stephen submissively walks to the settee and sits down. He takes The Speaker

LADY BRITOMART Dont begin to read, Stephen. I shall require all your attention

STEPHEN It was only while I was waiting—

LADY BRITOMART Dont make excuses, Stephen. [*He puts down The Speaker*] Now! [*She finishes her writing, rises, and comes to the settee*]. I have not kept you waiting very long, I think

STEPHEN Not at all, mother

LADY BRITOMART Bring me my cushion [*He takes the cushion from the chair at the desk and arranges it for her as she sits down on the settee*] Sit down [*He sits down and fingers his tie nervously*] Dont fiddle with your tie, Stephen there is nothing the matter with it

STEPHEN I beg your pardon [*He fiddles with his watch chain instead*]

LADY BRITOMART Now are you attending to me, Stephen?

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STEPHEN Of course, mother

LADY BRITOMART No it's not of course I want something much more than your everyday matter-of-course attention I am going to speak to you very seriously, Stephen I wish you would let that chain alone

STEPHEN [*hastily relinquishing the chain*] Have I done anything to annoy you, mother? If so, it was quite unintentional

LADY BRITOMART [*astonished*] Nonsense! [*With some remorse*] My poor boy, did you think I was angry with you?

STEPHEN What is it, then, mother? You are making me very uneasy

LADY BRITOMART [*squaring herself at him rather aggressively*] Stephen may I ask how soon you intend to realize that you are a grown-up man, and that I am only a woman?

STEPHEN [*amazed*] Only a—

LADY BRITOMART Don't repeat my words, please it is a most aggravating habit You must learn to face life seriously, Stephen I really cannot bear the whole burden of our family affairs any longer You must advise me you must assume the responsibility

STEPHEN I!

LADY BRITOMART Yes, you, of course You were twenty-four last June You've been at Harrow and Cambridge You've been to India and Japan You must know a lot of things, now, unless you have wasted your time most scandalously Well, advise me

STEPHEN [*much perplexed*] You know I have never interfered in the household—

LADY BRITOMART No I should think not I don't want you to order the dinner

STEPHEN I mean in our family affairs

LADY BRITOMART Well, you must interfere now, for they are getting quite beyond me

STEPHEN [*troubled*] I have thought sometimes that perhaps I ought; but really, mother, I know so little about them, and what I do know is so painful! it is so

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impossible to mention some things to you— [*he stops, ashamed*]

LADY BRITOMART I suppose you mean your father

STEPHEN [*almost inaudibly*] Yes

LADY BRITOMART My dear we cant go on all our lives not mentioning him Of course you were quite right not to open the subject until I asked you to , but you are old enough now to be taken into my confidence, and to help me to deal with him about the girls

STEPHEN But the girls are all right They are engaged

LADY BRITOMART [*complacently*] Yes I have made a very good match for Sarah Charles Lomax will be a millionaire when he is thirty-five But in the meantime his trustees cannot under the terms of his father's will allow him more than £800 a year

STEPHEN But the will says also that if he increases his income by his own exertions, they may double the increase

LADY BRITOMART. Charles Lomax's exertions are much more likely to decrease his income than to increase it Sarah will have to find at least another £800 a year for the next ten years , and even then they will be as poor as church mice And what about Barbara ? I thought Barbara was going to make the most brilliant career of all of you And what does she do ? Joins the Salvation Army, discharges her maid, lives on a pound a week, and walks in one evening with a professor of Greek whom she has picked up in the street, and who pretends to be a Salvationist, and actually plays the big drum for her in public because he has fallen head over ears in love with her

STEPHEN. I was certainly rather taken aback when I heard they were engaged Cusins is a very nice fellow, certainly . nobody would ever guess that he was born in Australia , but—

LADY BRITOMART Oh, Adolphus Cusins will make a very good husband. After all, nobody can say a word against Greek it stamps a man at once as an educated gentleman And my family, thank Heaven, is not a

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pig-headed Tory one. We are Whigs, and believe in liberty. Let snobbish people say what they please. Barbara shall marry, not the man they like, but the man I like.

STEPHEN Of course I was thinking only of his income. However, he is not likely to be extravagant.

LADY BRITOMART Dont be too sure of that, Stephen. I know your quiet, simple, refined, poetic people like Adolphus quite content with the best of everything! They cost more than your extravagant people, who are always as mean as they are second rate. No Barbara will need at least £2000 a year. You see it means two additional households. Besides, my dear, you must marry soon. I dont approve of the present fashion of philandering bachelors and late marriages, and I am trying to arrange something for you.

STEPHEN It's very good of you, mother, but perhaps I had better arrange that for myself.

LADY BRITOMART Nonsense! you are much too young to begin matchmaking. you would be taken in by some pretty little nobody. Of course I dont mean that you are not to be consulted. you know that as well as I do. [*Stephen closes his lips and is silent*] Now dont sulk, Stephen.

STEPHEN I am not sulking, mother. What has all this got to do with—with—with my father?

LADY BRITOMART My dear Stephen, where is the money to come from? It is easy enough for you and the other children to live on my income as long as we are in the same house, but I cant keep four families in four separate houses. You know how poor my father is. he has barely seven thousand a year now, and really, if he were not the Earl of Stevenage, he would have to give up society. He can do nothing for us. He says, naturally enough, that it is absurd that he should be asked to provide for the children of a man who is rolling in money. You see, Stephen, your father must be fabulously wealthy, because there is always a war going on somewhere.

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STEPHEN You need not remind me of that, mother I have hardly ever opened a newspaper in my life without seeing our name in it The Undershaft torpedo ! The Undershaft quick firers ! The Undershaft ten inch ! the Undershaft disappearing rampart gun ! the Undershaft submarine ! and now the Undershaft aerial battleship ! At Harrow they called me the Woolwich Infant At Cambridge it was the same A little brute at King's who was always trying to get up revivals, spoilt my Bible—your first birthday present to me—by writing under my name, “ Son and heir to Undershaft and Lazarus, Death and Destruction Dealers address, Christendom and Judea ” But that was not so bad as the way I was kowtowed to everywhere because my father was making millions by selling cannons

LADY BRITOMART It is not only the cannons, but the war loans that Lazarus arranges under cover of giving credit for the cannons You know, Stephen, it's perfectly scandalous Those two men, Andrew Undershaft and Lazarus, positively have Europe under their thumbs. That is why your father is able to behave as he does He is above the law Do you think Bismarck or Gladstone or Disraeli could have openly defied every social and moral obligation all their lives as your father has ? They simply wouldnt have dared I asked Gladstone to take it up I asked The Times to take it up I asked the Lord Chamberlain to take it up But it was just like asking them to declare war on the Sultan They wouldnt They said they couldnt touch him. I believe they were afraid

STEPHEN What could they do ? He does not actually break the law.

LADY BRITOMART. Not break the law ! He is always breaking the law He broke the law when he was born his parents were not married

STEPHEN Mother ! Is that true ?

LADY BRITOMART Of course it's true that was why we separated

STEPHEN He married without letting you know this !

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LADY BRITOMART [*rather taken aback by this inference*] Oh no To do Andrew justice, that was not the sort of thing he did Besides, you know the Undershaft motto · Unashamed Everybody knew

STEPHEN But you said that was why you separated

LADY BRITOMART Yes, because he was not content with being a foundling himself he wanted to disinherit you for another foundling That was what I couldnt stand

STEPHEN [*ashamed*] Do you mean for—for—for—

LADY BRITOMART Dont stammer, Stephen Speak distinctly

STEPHEN But this is so frightful to me, mother. To have to speak to you about such things !

LADY BRITOMART It's not pleasant for me, either, especially if you are still so childish that you must make it worse by a display of embarrassment It is only in the middle classes, Stephen, that people get into a state of dumb helpless horror when they find that there are wicked people in the world In our class, we have to decide what is to be done with wicked people , and nothing should disturb our self-possession Now ask your question properly

STEPHEN Mother have you no consideration for me ? For Heaven's sake either treat me as a child, as you always do, and tell me nothing at all , or tell me everything and let me take it as best I can

LADY BRITOMART Treat you as a child ! What do you mean ? It is most unkind and ungrateful of you to say such a thing You know I have never treated any of you as children I have always made you my companions and friends, and allowed you perfect freedom to do and say whatever you liked, so long as you liked what I could approve of

STEPHEN [*desperately*] I daresay we have been the very imperfect children of a very perfect mother , but I do beg you to let me alone for once, and tell me about this horrible business of my father wanting to set me aside for another son

LADY BRITOMART [*amazed*] Another son ! I never said any-

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thing of the kind I never dreamt of such a thing This is what comes of interrupting me

STEPHEN But you said—

LADY BRITOMART [*cutting him short*] Now be a good boy, Stephen, and listen to me patiently The Undershafths are descended from a foundling in the parish of St Andrew Undershaft in the city That was long ago, in the reign of James the First Well, this foundling was adopted by an armorer and gun-maker In the course of time the foundling succeeded to the business, and from some notion of gratitude, or some vow or something, he adopted another foundling, and left the business to him And that foundling did the same. Ever since that, the cannon business has always been left to an adopted foundling named Andrew Undershaft.

STEPHEN. But did they never marry? Were there no legitimate sons?

LADY BRITOMART Oh yes: they married just as your father did, and they were rich enough to buy land for their own children and leave them well provided for. But they always adopted and trained some foundling to succeed them in the business, and of course they always quarrelled with their wives furiously over it Your father was adopted in that way, and he pretends to consider himself bound to keep up the tradition and adopt somebody to leave the business to Of course I was not going to stand that. There may have been some reason for it when the Undershafths could only marry women in their own class, whose sons were not fit to govern great estates But there could be no excuse for passing over my son

STEPHEN [*dubiously*] I am afraid I should make a poor hand of managing a cannon foundry.

LADY BRITOMART Nonsense! you could easily get a manager and pay him a salary.

STEPHEN My father evidently had no great opinion of my capacity

LADY BRITOMART Stuff, child! you were only a baby it had nothing to do with your capacity. Andrew did it

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on principle, just as he did every perverse and wicked thing on principle. When my father remonstrated, Andrew actually told him to his face that history tells us of only two successful institutions—one the Under-shaft firm, and the other the Roman Empire under the Antonines. That was because the Antonine emperors all adopted their successors. Such rubbish! The Stevenages are as good as the Antonines, I hope; and you are a Stevenage. But that was Andrew all over. There you have the man! Always clever and unanswerable when he was defending nonsense and wickedness: always awkward and sullen when he had to behave sensibly and decently!

STEPHEN Then it was on my account that your home life was broken up, mother. I am sorry.

LADY BRITOMART Well, dear, there were other differences. I really cannot bear an immoral man. I am not a Pharisee, I hope, and I should not have minded his merely doing wrong things—we are none of us perfect. But your father didn't exactly do wrong things. He said them and thought them—that was what was so dreadful. He really had a sort of religion of wrongness. Just as one doesn't mind men practising immorality so long as they own that they are in the wrong by preaching morality, so I couldn't forgive Andrew for preaching immorality while he practised morality. You would all have grown up without principles, without any knowledge of right and wrong, if he had been in the house. You know, my dear, your father was a very attractive man in some ways. Children did not dislike him, and he took advantage of it to put the wickedest ideas into their heads, and make them quite unmanageable. I did not dislike him myself—very far from it, but nothing can bridge over moral disagreement.

STEPHEN All this simply bewilders me, mother. People may differ about matters of opinion, or even about religion, but how can they differ about right and wrong? Right is right, and wrong is wrong, and if a man cannot distinguish them properly, he is either

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a fool or a rascal thats all

LADY BRITOMART [*touched*] Thats my own boy [*she pats his cheek*] ! Your father never could answer that he used to laugh and get out of it under cover of some affectionate nonsense And now that you understand the situation, what do you advise me to do ?

STEPHEN Well, what can you do ?

LADY BRITOMART I must get the money somehow

STEPHEN We cannot take money from him I had rather go and live in some cheap place like Bedford Square or even Hampstead than take a farthing of his money

LADY BRITOMART But after all, Stephen, our present income comes from Andrew

STEPHEN [*shocked*] I never knew that

LADY BRITOMART Well, you surely didnt suppose your grandfather had anything to give me The Stevenages could not do everything for you We gave you social position Andrew had to contribute something. He had a very good bargain, I think

STEPHEN [*bitterly*] We are utterly dependent on him and his cannons, then ?

LADY BRITOMART Certainly not. the money is settled But he provided it So you see it is not a question of taking money from him or not it is simply a question of how much I dont want any more for myself

STEPHEN Nor do I

LADY BRITOMART But Sarah does, and Barbara does That is, Charles Lomax and Adolphus Cusins will cost them more So I must put my pride in my pocket and ask for it, I suppose That is your advice, Stephen, is it not ?

STEPHEN No

LADY BRITOMART [*sharply*] Stephen !

STEPHEN Of course if you are determined—

LADY BRITOMART I am not determined I ask your advice, and I am waiting for it. I will not have all the responsibility thrown on my shoulders

STEPHEN [*obstinately*] I would die sooner than ask him for another penny

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LADY BRITOMART [*resignedly*] You mean that I must ask him Very well, Stephen it shall be as you wish. You will be glad to know that your grandfather concurs. But he thinks I ought to ask Andrew to come here and see the girls After all, he must have some natural affection for them

STEPHEN Ask him here !!!

LADY BRITOMART Do not repeat my words, Stephen. Where else can I ask him ?

STEPHEN I never expected you to ask him at all

LADY BRITOMART Now dont tease, Stephen Come ! you see that it is necessary that he should pay us a visit, dont you ?

STEPHEN [*reluctantly*] I suppose so, if the girls cannot do without his money

LADY BRITOMART Thank you, Stephen I knew you would give me the right advice when it was properly explained to you I have asked your father to come this evening [*Stephen bounds from his seat*] Dont jump, Stephen it fidgets me

STEPHEN [*in utter consternation*] Do you mean to say that my father is coming here tonight—that he may be here at any moment ?

LADY BRITOMART [*looking at her watch*] I said nine. [*He gasps. She rises*] Ring the bell, please [*Stephen goes to the smaller writing table presses a button on it ; and sits at it with his elbows on the table and his head in his hands, outwitted and overwhelmed*] It is ten minutes to nine yet , and I have to prepare the girls I asked Charles Lomax and Adolphus to dinner on purpose that they might be here Andrew had better see them in case he should cherish any delusions as to their being capable of supporting their wives. [*The butler enters . Lady Britomart goes behind the settee to speak to him*] Morrison go up to the drawing room and tell everybody to come down here at once [*Morrison withdraws Lady Britomart turns to Stephen*] Now remember, Stephen . I shall need all your countenance and authority [*He rises and tries to recover some vestige of these*

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attributes] Give me a chair, dear [*He pushes a chair forward from the wall to where she stands, near the smaller writing table She sits down, and he goes to the armchair, into which he throws himself*] I dont know how Barbara will take it Ever since they made her a major in the Salvation Army she has developed a propensity to have her own way and order people about which quite cows me sometimes It's not ladylike. I'm sure I dont know where she picked it up Anyhow, Barbara shant bully me; but still it's just as well that your father should be here before she has time to refuse to meet him or make a fuss Dont look nervous, Stephen it will only encourage Barbara to make difficulties I am nervous enough, goodness knows; but I dont shew it

Sarah and Barbara come in with their respective young men, Charles Lomax and Adolphus Cusins Sarah is slender, bored, and mundane Barbara is robuster, jollier, much more energetic Sarah is fashionably dressed Barbara is in Salvation Army uniform Lomax, a young man about town, is like many other young men about town He is afflicted with a frivolous sense of humor which plunges him at the most inopportune moments into paroxysms of imperfectly suppressed laughter Cusins is a spectacled student, slight, thin haired, and sweet voiced, with a more complex form of Lomax's complaint. His sense of humor is intellectual and subtle, and is complicated by an appalling temper The lifelong struggle of a benevolent temperament and a high conscience against impulses of inhuman ridicule and fierce impatience has set up a chronic strain which has visibly wrecked his constitution He is a most implacable, determined, tenacious, intolerant person who by mere force of character presents himself as—and indeed actually is—considerate, gentle, explanatory, even mild and apologetic, capable possibly of murder, but not of cruelty or coarseness. By the operation of some instinct which is not merciful enough to blind him with the illusions of love, he is obstinately bent on marrying Barbara Lomax likes

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Sarah and thinks it will be rather a lark to marry her. Consequently he has not attempted to resist Lady Britomart's arrangements to that end

All four look as if they had been having a good deal of fun in the drawing room The girls enter first, leaving the swains outside Sarah comes to the settee. Barbara comes in after her and stops at the door

BARBARA. Are Cholly and Dolly to come in ?

LADY BRITOMART [*forcibly*] Barbara . I will not have Charles called Cholly . the vulgarity of it positively makes me ill

BARBARA It's all right, mother Cholly is quite correct nowadays Are they to come in ?

LADY BRITOMART Yes, if they will behave themselves

BARBARA [*through the door*] Come in, Dolly ; and behave yourself

Barbara comes to her mother's writing table Cusins enters smiling, and wanders towards Lady Britomart

SARAH [*calling*] Come in, Cholly. [*Lomax enters, controlling his features very imperfectly, and places himself vaguely between Sarah and Barbara*]

LADY BRITOMART [*peremptorily*] Sit down, all of you [*They sit Cusins crosses to the window and seats himself there Lomax takes a chair Barbara sits at the writing table and Sarah on the settee*] I dont in the least know what you are laughing at, Adolphus I am surprised at you, though I expected nothing better from Charles Lomax.

CUSINS [*in a remarkably gentle voice*] Barbara has been trying to teach me the West Ham Salvation March

LADY BRITOMART I see nothing to laugh at in that , nor should you if you are really converted.

CUSINS [*sweetly*] You were not present It was really funny, I believe

LOMAX Ripping

LADY BRITOMART Be quiet, Charles Now listen to me, children Your father is coming here this evening

General stupefaction Lomax, Sarah, and Barbara rise : Sarah scared, and Barbara amused and expectant

LOMAX [*demonstrating*] Oh I say !

MAJOR BARBARA

LADY BRITOMART. You are not called on to say anything,
Charles

SARAH Are you serious, mother ?

LADY BRITOMART. Of course I am serious It is on your
account, Sarah, and also on Charles's [*Silence Sarah
sits, with a shrug Charles looks painfully unworthy*] I
hope you are not going to object, Barbara

BARBARA I ' why should I ? My father has a soul to be
saved like anybody else He's quite welcome as far as
I am concerned [*She sits on the table, and softly
whistles ' Onward, Christian Soldiers '*]

LOMAX [*still remonstrant*] But really, dont you know ! Oh
I say !

LADY BRITOMART [*frigidly*] What do you wish to convey,
Charles ?

LOMAX Well, you must admit that this is a bit thick

LADY BRITOMART [*turning with ominous suavity to Cusins*]
Adolphus you are a professor of Greek Can you
translate Charles Lomax's remarks into reputable
English for us ?

CUSINS [*cautiously*] If I may say so, Lady Brit, I think Charles
has rather happily expressed what we all feel Homer
speaking of Autolycus, uses the same phrase, *πυκινὸν
δόμον ἐλθεῖν* means a bit thick

LOMAX [*handsomely*] Not that I mind, you know, if Sarah
dont [*He sits*]

LADY BRITOMART [*crushingly*] Thank you Have I your
permission, Adolphus, to invite my own husband to
my own house ?

CUSINS [*gallantly*] You have my unhesitating support in
everything you do

LADY BRITOMART Tush ! Sarah have you nothing to say ?

SARAH Do you mean that he is coming regularly to live
here ?

LADY BRITOMART Certainly not The spare room is ready
for him if he likes to stay for a day or two and see a
little more of you , but there are limits

SARAH Well, he cant eat us, I suppose I dont mind

LOMAX [*chuckling*] I wonder how the old man will take it

MAJOR BARBARA

LADY BRITOMART Much as the old woman will, no doubt,
Charles

LOMAX [*abashed*] I didnt mean—at least—

LADY BRITOMART You didnt think, Charles You never
do , and the result is, you never mean anything And
now please attend to me, children Your father will be
quite a stranger to us

LOMAX I suppose he hasnt seen Sarah since she was a little
kid

LADY BRITOMART Not since she was a little kid, Charles, as
you express it with that elegance of diction and refine-
ment of thought that seem never to desert you Accord-
ingly—er— [*impatiently*] Now I have forgotten what I
was going to say That comes of your provoking me
to be sarcastic, Charles Adolphus will you kindly
tell me where I was

CUSINS [*sweetly*] You were saying that as Mr Undershaft has
not seen his children since they were babies, he will form
his opinion of the way you have brought them up from
their behavior tonight, and that therefore you wish us
all to be particularly careful to conduct ourselves well,
especially Charles

LADY BRITOMART [*with emphatic approval*] Precisely

LOMAX Look here, Dolly Lady Brit didnt say that

LADY BRITOMART [*vehemently*] I did, Charles Adolphus's
recollection is perfectly correct It is most important
that you should be good , and I do beg you for once
not to pair off into opposite corners and giggle and
whisper while I am speaking to your father

BARBARA All right, mother We'll do you credit [*She
comes off the table, and sits in her chair with ladylike
elegance*]

LADY BRITOMART Remember, Charles, that Sarah will want
to feel proud of you instead of ashamed of you

LOMAX Oh I say ' theres nothing to be exactly proud of,
dont you know

LADY BRITOMART Well, try and look as if there was
*Morrison, pale and dismayed, breaks into the room in un-
cealed disorder*

MAJOR BARBARA

MORRISON Might I speak a word to you, my lady ?

LADY BRITOMART Nonsense ! Shew him up

MORRISON Yes, my lady [*He goes*]

LOMAX Does Morrison know who it is ?

LADY BRITOMART. Of course Morrison has always been with us

LOMAX It must be a regular corker for him, dont you know.

LADY BRITOMART Is this a moment to get on my nerves, Charles, with your outrageous expressions ?

LOMAX But this is something out of the ordinary, really—

MORRISON [*at the door*] The—er—Mr Undershaft [*He retreats in confusion*]

Andrew Undershaft comes in All rise Lady Britomart meets him in the middle of the room behind the settee

Andrew is, on the surface, a stoutish, easygoing elderly man, with kindly patient manners, and an engaging simplicity of character But he has a watchful, deliberate, waiting, listening face, and formidable reserves of power, both bodily and mental, in his capacious chest and long head. His gentleness is partly that of a strong man who has learnt by experience that his natural grip hurts ordinary people unless he handles them very carefully, and partly the mellowness of age and success. He is also a little shy in his present very delicate situation

LADY BRITOMART Good evening, Andrew

UNDERSHAFT How d'y'e do, my dear

LADY BRITOMART You look a good deal older

UNDERSHAFT [*apologetically*] I am somewhat older [*Taking her hand with a touch of courtship*] Time has stood still with you

LADY BRITOMART [*throwing away his hand*] Rubbish ! This is your family

UNDERSHAFT [*surprised*] Is it so large ? I am sorry to say my memory is failing very badly in some things [*He offers his hand with paternal kindness to Lomax*].

LOMAX [*jerkily shaking his hand*] Ahdedoo

UNDERSHAFT I can see you are my eldest I am very glad to meet you again, my boy

LOMAX [*remonstrating*] No, but look here dont you know—
[*Overcome*] Oh I say !

LADY BRITOMART [*recovering from momentary speechlessness*]
Andrew do you mean to say that you dont remember
how many children you have ?

UNDERSHAFT Well, I am afraid I— They have grown so
much—er Am I making any ridiculous mistake ? I
may as well confess I recollect only one son. But so
many things have happened since, of course—er—

LADY BRITOMART [*decisively*] Andrew you are talking
nonsense Of course you have only one son

UNDERSHAFT Perhaps you will be good enough to introduce
me, my dear

LADY BRITOMART. That is Charles Lomax, who is engaged
to Sarah

UNDERSHAFT My dear sir, I beg your pardon

LOMAX Notatall Delighted, I assure you.

LADY BRITOMART This is Stephen

UNDERSHAFT [*bowing*] Happy to make your acquaintance,
Mr Stephen Then [*going to Cusins*] you must be my
son [*Taking Cusins' hands in his*] How are you, my
young friend ? [*To Lady Britomart*] He is very like
you, my love

CUSINS You flatter me, Mr Undershaft My name is
Cusins engaged to Barbara [*Very explicitly*] That is
Major Barbara Undershaft, of the Salvation Army
That is Sarah, your second daughter. This is Stephen
Undershaft, your son

UNDERSHAFT My dear Stephen, I beg your pardon

STEPHEN Not at all

UNDERSHAFT Mr Cusins I am much indebted to you for
explaining so precisely [*Turning to Sarah*] Barbara,
my dear—

SARAH [*prompting him*] Sarah

UNDERSHAFT. Sarah, of course. [*They shake hands He
goes over to Barbara*] Barbara—I am right this time, I
hope ?

BARBARA Quite right. [*They shake hands*].

LADY BRITOMART [*resuming command*] Sit down, all of you

MAJOR BARBARA

Sit down, Andrew [*She comes forward and sits on the settee Cusins also brings his chair forward on her left Barbara and Stephen resume their seats Lomax gives his chair to Sarah and goes for another*]

UNDERSHAFT Thank you, my love

LOMAX [*conversationally, as he brings a chair forward between the writing table and the settee, and offers it to Undershaft*] Takes you some time to find out exactly where you are, dont it ?

UNDERSHAFT [*accepting the chair, but remaining standing*] That is not what embarrasses me, Mr Lomax My difficulty is that if I play the part of a father, I shall produce the effect of an intrusive stranger , and if I play the part of a discreet stranger, I may appear a callous father

LADY BRITOMART There is no need for you to play any part at all, Andrew You had much better be sincere and natural

UNDERSHAFT [*submissively*] Yes, my dear I daresay that will be best [*He sits down comfortably*] Well, here I am Now what can I do for you all ?

LADY BRITOMART You need not do anything, Andrew You are one of the family You can sit with us and enjoy yourself

A painfully conscious pause. Barbara makes a face at Lomax, whose too long suppressed mirth immediately explodes in agonized neighings

LADY BRITOMART [*outraged*] Charles Lomax if you can behave yourself, behave yourself If not, leave the room

LOMAX. I'm awfully sorry, Lady Brit , but really you know, upon my soul ! [*He sits on the settee between Lady Britomart and Undershaft, quite overcome*]

BARBARA Why dont you laugh if you want to, Cholly ? It's good for your inside

LADY BRITOMART Barbara you have had the education of a lady Please let your father see that , and dont talk like a street girl

UNDERSHAFT Never mind me, my dear As you know, I am not a gentleman , and I was never educated

MAJOR BARBARA

LOMAX. Righto ! [*He sits down in his former place, and preludes*]

UNDERSHAFT One moment, Mr Lomax, I am rather interested in the Salvation Army Its motto might be my own Blood and Fire.

LOMAX [*shocked*] But not your sort of blood and fire, you know

UNDERSHAFT. My sort of blood cleanses . my sort of fire purifies

BARBARA So do ours. Come down tomorrow to my shelter—the West Ham shelter—and see what we're doing We're going to march to a great meeting in the Assembly Hall at Mile End Come and see the shelter and then march with us . it will do you a lot of good. Can you play anything ?

UNDERSHAFT. In my youth I earned pennies, and even shillings occasionally, in the streets and in public house parlors by my natural talent for stepdancing Later on, I became a member of the Undershaft orchestral society, and performed passably on the tenor trombone

LOMAX [*scandalized—putting down the concertina*] Oh I say !

BARBARA. Many a sinner has played himself into heaven on the trombone, thanks to the Army

LOMAX [*to Barbara, still rather shocked*] Yes but what about the cannon business, dont you know ? [*To Undershaft*] Getting into heaven is not exactly in your line, is it ?

LADY BRITOMART. Charles !!!

LOMAX Well , but it stands to reason, dont it ? The cannon business may be necessary and all that we cant get on without cannons , but it isnt right, you know. On the other hand, there may be a certain amount of tosh about the Salvation Army—I belong to the Established Church myself—but still you cant deny that it's religion; and you cant go against religion, can you ? At least unless youre downright immoral, dont you know.

UNDERSHAFT You hardly appreciate my position, Mr Lomax—

MAJOR BARBARA

LOMAX [*hastily*] I'm not saying anything against you personally—

UNDERSHAFT Quite so, quite so But consider for a moment Here I am, a profiteer in mutilation and murder I find myself in a specially amiable humor just now because, this morning, down at the foundry, we blew twenty-seven dummy soldiers into fragments with a gun which formerly destroyed only thirteen

LOMAX [*leniently*] Well, the more destructive war becomes, the sooner it will be abolished, eh ?

UNDERSHAFT Not at all The more destructive war becomes the more fascinating we find it No, Mr Lomax I am obliged to you for making the usual excuse for my trade , but I am not ashamed of it I am not one of those men who keep their morals and their business in water-tight compartments All the spare money my trade rivals spend on hospitals, cathedrals, and other receptacles for conscience money, I devote to experiments and researches in improved methods of destroying life and property I have always done so , and I always shall Therefore your Christmas card moralities of peace on earth and goodwill among men are of no use to me Your Christianity, which enjoins you to resist not evil, and to turn the other cheek, would make me a bankrupt My morality—my religion—must have a place for cannons and torpedoes in it.

STEPHEN [*coldly—almost sullenly*] You speak as if there were half a dozen moralities and religions to choose from, instead of one true morality and one true religion

UNDERSHAFT For me there is only one true morality , but it might not fit you, as you do not manufacture aerial battleships There is only one true morality for every man , but every man has not the same true morality

LOMAX [*overtaxed*] Would you mind saying that again ? I didnt quite follow it

CUSINS It's quite simple As Euripides says, one man's meat is another man's poison morally as well as physically

UNDERSHAFT Precisely.

MAJOR BARBARA

LOMAX. Oh, that! Yes, yes, yes True. True

SIEPHEN In other words, some men are honest and some are scoundrels

BARBARA. Bosh! There are no scoundrels.

UNDERSHAFT Indeed? Are there any good men?

BARBARA No Not one There are neither good men nor scoundrels there are just children of one Father, and the sooner they stop calling one another names the better You neednt talk to me: I know them Ive had scores of them through my hands scoundrels, criminals, infidels, philanthropists, missionaries, county councillors, all sorts Theyre all just the same sort of sinner, and theres the same salvation ready for them all

UNDERSHAFT May I ask have you ever saved a maker of cannons?

BARBARA. No Will you let me try?

UNDERSHAFT. Well, I will make a bargain with you If I go to see you tomorrow in your Salvation Shelter, will you come the day after to see me in my cannon works?

BARBARA Take care It may end in your giving up the cannons for the sake of the Salvation Army

UNDERSHAFT. Are you sure it will not end in your giving up the Salvation Army for the sake of the cannons?

BARBARA. I will take my chance of that

UNDERSHAFT And I will take my chance of the other [*They shake hands on it*] Where is your shelter?

BARBARA In West Ham At the sign of the cross Ask anybody in Canning Town Where are your works?

UNDERSHAFT. In Perivale St Andrews. At the sign of the sword Ask anybody in Europe

LOMAX Hadnt I better play something?

BARBARA. Yes Give us 'Onward, Christian Soldiers'

LOMAX. Well, thats rather a strong order to begin with, dont you know Suppose I sing Thourts passing hence, my brother Its much the same tune

BARBARA Its too melancholy You get saved, Cholly; and youll pass hence, my brother, without making such a fuss about it

MAJOR BARBARA

LADY BRITOMART Really, Barbara, you go on as if religion were a pleasant subject Do have some sense of propriety

UNDERSHAFT I do not find it an unpleasant subject, my dear.

It is the only one that capable people really care for

LADY BRITOMART [*looking at her watch*] Well, if you are determined to have it, I insist on having it in a proper and respectable way. Charles ring for prayers

General amazement Stephen rises in dismay.

LOMAX [*rising*] Oh I say !

UNDERSHAFT [*rising*] I am afraid I must be going.

LADY BRITOMART. You cannot go now, Andrew it would be most improper. Sit down What will the servants think ?

UNDERSHAFT My dear I have conscientious scruples May I suggest a compromise ? If Barbara will conduct a little service in the drawing room, with Mr Lomax as organist, I will attend it willingly I will even take part, if a trombone can be procured

LADY BRITOMART Dont mock, Andrew.

UNDERSHAFT [*shocked—to Barbara*] You dont think I am mocking, my love, I hope

BARBARA No, of course not, and it wouldnt matter if you were half the Army came to their first meeting for a lark [*Rising*] Come along [*She throws her arm round her father and sweeps him out, calling to the others from the threshold*] Come, Dolly Come, Cholly

Cusins rises

LADY BRITOMART I will not be disobeyed by everybody Adolphus : sit down [*He does not*] Charles you may go You are not fit for prayers you cannot keep your countenance.

LOMAX. Oh I say ! [*He goes out*].

LADY BRITOMART [*continuing*] But you, Adolphus, can behave yourself if you choose to I insist on your staying

CUSINS My dear Lady Brit there are things in the family prayer book that I couldnt bear to hear you say.

LADY BRITOMART. What things, pray ?

CUSINS. Well, you would have to say before all the servants

MAJOR BARBARA

that we have done things we ought not to have done, and left undone things we ought to have done, and that there is no health in us I cannot bear to hear you doing yourself such an injustice, and Barbara such an injustice. As for myself, I flatly deny it I have done my best I shouldnt dare to marry Barbara—I couldnt look you in the face—if it were true So I must go to the drawing room

LADY BRITOMART [*offended*] Well, go [*He starts for the door*] And remember this, Adolphus [*he turns to listen*] I have a very strong suspicion that you went to the Salvation Army to worship Barbara and nothing else And I quite appreciate the very clever way in which you systematically humbug me I have found you out Take care Barbara doesnt Thats all

CUSINS [*with unruffled sweetness*] Dont tell on me [*He steals out*]

LADY BRITOMART. Sarah if you want to go, go Anything's better than to sit there as if you wished you were a thousand miles away

SARAH [*languidly*] Very well, mamma [*She goes*]
Lady Britomart, with a sudden flounce, gives way to a little gust of tears

STEPHEN [*going to her*] Mother . whats the matter ?

LADY BRITOMART [*swishing away her tears with her handkerchief*] Nothing Foolishness You can go with him, too, if you like, and leave me with the servants

STEPHEN Oh, you mustnt think that, mother I—I dont like him

LADY BRITOMART The others do That is the injustice of a woman's lot A woman has to bring up her children , and that means to restrain them, to deny them things they want, to set them tasks, to punish them when they do wrong, to do all the unpleasant things And then the father, who has nothing to do but pet them and spoil them, comes in when all her work is done and steals their affection from her

STEPHEN He has not stolen our affection from you. It is only curiosity

MAJOR BARBARA

LADY BRITOMART [*violently*] I wont be consoled, Stephen
There is nothing the matter with me [*She rises and goes
towards the door*]

STEPHEN Where are you going, mother ?

LADY BRITOMART To the drawing room, of course [*She
goes out 'Onward, Christian Soldiers,' on the concertina,
with tambourine accompaniment, is heard when the door
opens*] Are you coming, Stephen ?

STEPHEN No. Certainly not [*She goes He sits down on
the settee, with compressed lips and an expression of
strong dislike*]

*The yard of the West Ham shelter of the Salvation Army is a
cold place on a January morning The building itself, an
old warehouse, is newly whitewashed Its gabled end
projects into the yard in the middle, with a door on the
ground floor, and another in the loft above it without any
balcony or ladder, but with a pulley rigged over it for
hoisting sacks Those who come from this central gable
end into the yard have the gateway leading to the street
on their left, with a stone horse-trough just beyond it, and,
on the right, a penthouse shielding a table from the
weather. There are forms at the table, and on them are
seated a man and a woman, both much down on their luck,
finishing a meal of bread (one thick slice each, with
margarine and golden syrup) and diluted milk*

*The man, a workman out of employment, is young, agile, a
talker, a poser, sharp enough to be capable of anything
in reason except honesty or altruistic considerations of
any kind The woman is a commonplace old bundle of
poverty and hard-worn humanity She looks sixty and
probably is forty-five If they were rich people, gloved
and muffed and well wrapped up in furs and overcoats,
they would be numbed and miserable, for it is a grind-
ingly cold raw January day, and a glance at the back-
ground of grimy warehouses and leaden sky visible over
the whitewashed walls of the yard would drive any idle
rich person straight to the Mediterranean But these two,
being no more troubled with visions of the Mediterranean
than of the moon, and being compelled to keep more of*

MAJOR BARBARA

their clothes in the pawnshop, and less on their persons, in winter than in summer, are not depressed by the cold - rather are they stung into vivacity, to which their meal has just now given an almost jolly turn The man takes a pull at his mug, and then gets up and moves about the yard with his hands deep in his pockets, occasionally breaking into a stepdance

THE WOMAN Feel better arter your meal, sir ?

THE MAN. No. Call that a meal ! Good enough for you, praps , but wot is it to me, an intelligent workin man

THE WOMAN Workin man ! Wot are you ?

THE MAN Painter.

THE WOMAN [*sceptically*] Yus, I dessay

THE MAN Yus, you dessay ! I know Every loafer that cant do nothink calls isself a painter Well, I'm a real painter : grainer, finisher, thirty-eight bob a week when I can get it.

THE WOMAN. Then why dont you go and get it ?

THE MAN I'll tell you why Fust . I'm intelligent—fffff ! it's rotten cold here [*he dances a step or two*]—yes intelligent beyond the station o life into which it has pleased the capitalists to call me , and they dont like a man that sees through em Second, an intelligent bein needs a doo share of appiness , so I drink somethink cruel when I get the chawnce. Thrd, I stand by my class and do as little as I can so's to leave arf the job for me fellow workers Fourth, I'm fly enough to know wots inside the law and wots outside it , and inside it I do as the capitalists do pinch wot I can lay me ands on In a proper state of society I am sober, industrious and honest . in Rome, so to speak, I do as the Romans do Wots the consequence ? When trade is bad—and it's rotten bad just now—and the employers az to sack arf their men, they generally start on me

THE WOMAN Whats your name ?

THE MAN Price. Bronterre O'Brien Price Usually called Snobby Price, for short

THE WOMAN Snobby's a carpenter, aint it ? You said you was a painter

MAJOR BARBARA

PRICE Not that kind of snob, but the genteel sort I'm too uppish, owing to my intelligence, and my father being a Chartist and a reading, thinking man : a stationer, too I'm none of your common hewers of wood and drawers of water , and dont you forget it [*He returns to his seat at the table, and takes up his mug*] Wots your name ?

THE WOMAN Rummy Mitchens, sir

PRICE [*quaffing the remains of his milk to her*] Your elth, Miss Mitchens

RUMMY [*correcting him*] Missis Mitchens

PRICE Wot ! Oh Rummy, Rummy ! Respectable married woman, Rummy, gittin rescued by the Salvation Army by pretendin to be a bad un Same old game !

RUMMY What am I to do ? I cant starve Them Salvation lasses is dear good girls , but the better you are, the worse they likes to think you were before they rescued you Why shouldnt they av a bit o credit, poor loves ? theyre worn to rags by their work. And where would they get the money to rescue us if we was to let on we're no worse than other people ? You know what ladies and gentlemen are.

PRICE Thievin swine ! Wish I ad their job, Rummy, all the same Wot does Rummy stand for ? Pet name praps ?

RUMMY Short for Romola

PRICE For wot ! ?

RUMMY Romola It was out of a new book Somebody me mother wanted me to grow up like

PRICE We're companions in misfortune, Rummy Both on us got names that nobody cawnt pronounce Consequently I'm Snobby and youre Rummy because Bill and Sally wasnt good enough for our parents Such is life !

RUMMY Who saved you, Mr Price ? Was it Major Barbara ?

PRICE No : I come here on my own I'm going to be Bronterre O'Brien Price, the converted painter I know wot they like I'll tell em how I blasphemed an gambled and wopped my poor old mother—

MAJOR BARBARA

RUMMY [*shocked*] Used you to beat your mother ?

PRICE Not likely She used to beat me No matter you come and listen to the converted painter, and you'll hear how she was a pious woman that taught me me prayers at er knee, an how I used to come home drunk and drag her out o bed be er snow white airs, an lam into er with the poker

RUMMY That's wha's so unfair to us women Your confessions is just as big lies as ours you dont tell what you really done no more than us ; but you men can tell your lies right out at the meetins and be made much of for it ; while the sort o confessions we az to make az to be wispered to one lady at a time It aint right, spite of all their piety

PRICE Right ! Do you spose the Army 'd be allowed if it went and did right ? Not much It combs our air and makes us good little blokes to be robbed and put upon But I'll play the game as good as any of em I'll see somebody struck by lightnin, or hear a voice sayin " Snobby Price where will you spend eternity ? " I'll av a time of it, I tell you

RUMMY You wont be let drink, though

PRICE I'll take it out in gorspellin, then I dont want to drink if I can get fun enough any other way

Jenny Hill, a pale, overwrought, pretty Salvation lass of eighteen, comes in through the yard gate, leading Peter Shirley, a half hardened, half worn-out elderly man, weak with hunger

JENNY [*supporting him*] Come ! pluck up I'll get you something to eat You'll be all right then

PRICE [*rising and hurrying officiously to take the old man off Jenny's hands*] Poor old man ! Cheer up, brother you'll find rest and peace and appiness ere Hurry up with the food, miss e's fair done [*Jenny hurries into the shelter*] Ere, buck up, daddy ! she's fetchin y'a thick slice o breadn treacle, an a mug o skyblue [*He seats him at the corner of the table*]

RUMMY [*gaily*] Keep up your old art ! Never say die !

SHIRLEY I'm not an old man I'm only forty-six I'm as

MAJOR BARBARA

good as ever I was The grey patch come in my hair before I was thirty All it wants is three pennorth o hair dye am I to be turned on the streets to starve for it ? Holy God ! I've worked ten to twelve hours a day since I was thirteen, and paid my way all through , and now am I to be thrown into the gutter and my job given to a young man that can do it no better than me because Ive black hair that goes white at the first change ?

PRICE [*cheerfully*] No good jawrin about it Youre ony a jumped-up, jerked-off, orspittle-turned-out incurable of an ole workin man who cares about you ? Eh ? Make the thievin swine give you a meal theyve stole many a one from you Get a bit o your own back [*Jenny returns with the usual meal*]. There you are, brother Awsk a blessin an tuck that into you

SHIRLEY [*looking at it ravenously but not touching it, and crying like a child*] I never took anything before

JENNY [*petting him*] Come, come ! the Lord sends it to you he wasnt above taking bread from his friends , and why should you be ? Besides, when we find you a job you can pay us for it if you like

SHIRLEY [*eagerly*] Yes, yes thats true I can pay you back it's only a loan [*Shivering*] Oh Lord ! oh Lord ! [*He turns to the table and attacks the meal ravenously*]

JENNY Well, Rummy, are you more comfortable now ?

RUMMY God bless you, lovey ! youve fed my body and saved my soul, havnt you ? [*Jenny, touched, kisses her*] Sit down and rest a bit you must be ready to drop

JENNY. Ive been going hard since morning But theres more work than we can do I mustnt stop

RUMMY Try a prayer for just two minutes Youll work all the better after

JENNY [*her eyes lighting up*] Oh isnt it wonderful how a few minutes prayer revives you ! I was quite lightheaded at twelve o'clock, I was so tired , but Major Barbara just sent me to pray for five minutes , and I was able to go on as if I had only just begun. [*To Price*] Did you have a piece of bread ?

PRICE [*with unction*] Yes, miss , but Ive got the piece that I

MAJOR BARBARA

value more , and thats the peace that passeth hall
bannerstennin

RUMMY [*fervently*] Glory Hallelujah !

Bill Walker, a rough customer of about twenty-five, appears at the yard gate and looks malevolently at Jenny

JENNY That makes me so happy When you say that, I feel wicked for loitering here I must get to work again

She is hurrying to the shelter, when the new-comer moves quickly up to the door and intercepts her. His manner is so threatening that she retreats as he comes at her truculently, driving her down the yard

BILL Aw knaow you Youre the one that took awy maw girl Youre the one that set er agen me. Well, I'm gowin to ev er aht Not that Aw care a carse for er or you see? Bat Aw'll let er knaow , and Aw'll let y ou knaow Aw'm gowin to give her a doin thatll teach er to cat awy from me. Nah in wiv you and tell er to cam aht afore Aw cam in and kick er aht Tell er Bill Walker wants er. She'll knaow wot thet means , and if she keeps me witin itll be worse You stop to jawr beck at me ; and Aw'll stawt on you . d'ye eah ? Theres your wy In you gow [*He takes her by the arm and slings her towards the door of the shelter She falls on her hand and knee Rummy helps her up again*]

PRICE [*rising, and venturing irresolutely towards Bill*] Easy there, mate She aint doin you no arm

BILL. Oo are you callin mite? [*Standing over him threateningly*] Youre gowin to stend ap for er, aw yer ? Put ap your ands

RUMMY [*running indignantly to him to scold him*] Oh, you great brute— [*He instantly swings his left hand back against her face She screams and reels back to the trough, where she sits down, covering her bruised face with her hands and rocking herself and moaning with pain*].

JENNY [*going to her*] Oh, God forgive you ! How could you strike an old woman like that ?

BILL [*seizing her by the hair so violently that she also screams, and tearing her away from the old woman*] You Gawd forgimme again an Aw'll Gawd forgive you one on

the jawr thetill stop you piyin for a week [*Holding her and turning fiercely on Price*] Ev you ennything to sy agen it ?

PRICE [*intimidated*] No, matey she aint anything to do with me

BILL Good job for you ! Aw'd pat two meals into you and fawt you with one finger arter, you stawved cur. [*To Jenny*] Nah are you gowin to fetch aht Mog Ebbijem , or em Aw to knock your fice off you and fetch her meself ?

JENNY [*writhing in his grasp*] Oh please someone go in and tell Major Barbara—[*she screams again as he wrenches her head dōwn ; and Price and Rummy flee into the shelter*]

BILL. You want to gow in and tell your Mijor of me, do you ?

JENNY Oh please dont drag my hair Let me go

BILL Do you or downt you ? [*She stifles a scream*] Yus or nao ?

JENNY. God give me strength—

BILL [*striking her with his fist in the face*] Gow an shaow her thet, and tell her if she wants one lawk it to cam and interfere with me [*Jenny, crying with pain, goes into the shed He goes to the form and addresses the old man*] Eah finish your mess , an git aht o maw wy

SHIRLEY [*springing up and facing him fiercely, with the mug in his hand*] You take a liberty with me, and I'll smash you over the face with the mug and cut your eye out Aint you satisfied—young whelps like you—with takin the bread out o the mouths of your elders that have brought you up and slaved for you, but you must come shovin and cheekin and bullyin in here, where the bread o charity is sickenin in our stummicks ?

BILL [*contemptuously, but backing a little*] Wot good are you, you aold palsy mag ? Wot good are you ?

SHIRLEY As good as you and better I'll do a day's work agen you or any fat young soaker of your age Go and take my job at Horrockses, where I worked for ten year They want young men there they cant afford

MAJOR BARBARA

to keep men over forty-five Theyre very sorry—give you a character and happy to help you to get anything suited to your years—sure a steady man wont be long out of a job Well, let em try you. Theyll find the differ What do you know? Not as much as how to beeyave yourself—layin your dirty fist across the mouth of a respectable woman !

BILL Downt provowk me to ly it acrost yours d'ye eah ?

SHIRLEY [*with blighting contempt*] Yes . you like an old man to hit, dont you, when youve finished with the women I aint seen you hit a young one yet

BILL [*stung*] You loy, you aold soupkitchener, you There was a yang menn eah Did Aw offer to itt him or did Aw not ?

SHIRLEY Was he starvin or was he not ? Was he a man or only a crosseyed thief an a loafer ? Would you hit my son-in-law's brother ?

BILL Oo's ee ?

SHIRLEY Todger Fairmile o Balls Pond Him that won £20 off the Japanese wiastler at the music hall by standin out 17 minutes 4 seconds agen him

BILL [*sullenly*] Aw'm nao music awl wrastler Ken he box ?

SHIRLEY. Yes : an you cant

BILL Wot ! Aw cawnt, cawnt Aw ? Wots thet you sy [*threatening him*] ?

SHIRLEY [*not budging an inch*] Will you box Todger Fairmile if I put him on to you ? Say the word

BILL [*subsiding with a slouch*] Aw'll stend ap to enny menn alawv, if he was ten Todger Fairmawls But Aw dont set ap to be a perfeshnal

SHIRLEY [*looking down on him with unfathomable disdain*] You box ! Slap an old woman with the back o your hand ! You hadnt even the sense to hit her where a magistrate couldnt see the mark of it, you silly young lump of conceit and ignorance Hit a girl in the jaw and ony make her cry ! If Todger Fairmile'd done it, she wouldnt a got up inside o ten minutes, no more than you would if he got on to you Yah ! I'd set about you myself if I had a week's feedin in me instead o two

MAJOR BARBARA

months' starvation [*He turns his back on him and sits down moodily at the table*]

BILL [*following him and stooping over him to drive the taunt in*] You loy ' youve the bread and treacle in you that you can eah to beg

SHIRLEY [*bursting into tears*] Oh God ' it's true , I'm only an old pauper on the scrap heap [*Furiously*] But youll come to it yourself , and then youll know Youll come to it sooner than a teetotaller like me, fillin yourself with gin at this hour o the mornin '

BILL Aw'm nao gin drinker, you oald lawr ; bat wen Aw want to give my girl a bloomin good awdin Aw lawk to ev a bit o devil in me see ? An eah Aw emm, talkin to a rotten aold blawter like you sted o givin her wot for [*Working himself into a rage*] Aw'm gowin in there to fetch her aht [*He makes vengefully for the shelter door*]

SHIRLEY Youre goin to the station on a stretcher, more likely , and theyll take the gin and the devil out of you there when they get you inside You mind what youre about : the major here is the Earl o Stevenage's grand-daughter

BILL [*checked*] Garn '

SHIRLEY Youll see

BILL [*his resolution oozing*] Well, Aw aint dan nathin to er

SHIRLEY Spose she said you did ' who'd believe you ?

BILL [*very uneasy, skulking back to the corner of the pent-house*] Gawd ' theres no jastice in this cantry To think wot them people can do ' Aw'm as good as er

SHIRLEY Tell her so It's just what a fool like you would do

Barbara, brisk and businesslike, comes from the shelter with a note book, and addresses herself to Shirley Bill, cowed, sits down in the corner on a form, and turns his back on them

BARBARA Good morning

SHIRLEY [*standing up and taking off his hat*] Good morning,
MISS

BARBARA Sit down make yourself at home [*He hesitates ;*

MAJOR BARBARA

but she puts a friendly hand on his shoulder and makes him obey] Now then ! since youve made friends with us, we want to know all about you Names and addresses and trades.

SHIRLEY Peter Shirley Fitter Chucked out two months ago because I was too old

BARBARA [*not at all surprised*] Youd pass still Why didnt you dye your hair ?

SHIRLEY I did Me age come out at a coroner's inquest on me daughter.

BARBARA. Steady ?

SHIRLEY Teetotaller Never out of a job before Good worker And sent to the knackers like an old horse !

BARBARA No matter : if you did your part God will do his

SHIRLEY [*suddenly stubborn*] My religion's no concern of anybody but myself.

BARBARA [*guessing*] I know. Secularist ?

SHIRLEY [*hotly*] Did I offer to deny it ?

BARBARA Why should you ? My own father's a Secularist, I think. Our Father—yours and mine—fulfils himself in many ways ; and I daresay he knew what he was about when he made a Secularist of you So buck up, Pcter ! we can always find a job for a steady man like you [*Shirley, disarmed and a little bewildered, touches his hat. She turns from him to Bill*] Whats your name ?

BILL [*insolently*] Wots thet to you ?

BARBARA [*calmly making a note*] Afraid to give his name Any trade ?

BILL Oo's afride to give is nime ? [*Doggedly, with a sense of heroically defying the House of Lords in the person of Lord Stevenage*] If you want to bring a chawge agen me, bring it [*She waits, unruffled*] Moy nime's Bill Walker

BARBARA [*as if the name were familiar . trying to remember how*] Bill Walker ? [*Recollecting*] Oh, I know : youre the man that Jenny Hill was praying for inside just now [*She enters his name in her note book*]

BILL. Oo's Jenny Ill ? And wot call as she to pry for me ?

BARBARA I dont know. Perhaps it was you that cut her lip

MAJOR BARBARA

BILL [*defiantly*] Yus, it was me that cat her lip Aw aint afride o you

BARBARA How could you be, since youre not afraid of God? Youre a brave man, Mr Walker It takes some pluck to do our work here, but none of us dare lift our hand against a girl like that, for fear of her father in heaven

BILL [*sullenly*] I want nan o your kentin jawr I spowse you think Aw cam eah to beg from you, like this demmaged lot eah Not me Aw dont want your bread and scribe and ketlep Aw dont blieve in your Gawd, no more than you do yourself

BARBARA [*sunnily apologetic and ladylike, as on a new footing with him*] Oh, I beg your pardon for putting your name down, Mr Walker. I didnt understand I'll strike it out.

BILL [*taking this as a slight, and deeply wounded by it*] Eah! you let maw nime alown Aint it good enaff to be in your book?

BARBARA [*considering*] Well, you see, theres no use putting down your name unless I can do something for you, is there? Whats your trade?

BILL [*still smarting*] Thets nao concern o yours.

BARBARA Just so [*Very businesslike*] I'll put you down as [*writing*] the man who—struck—poor little Jenny Hill—in the mouth.

BILL [*rising threateningly*] See eah Awve ed enaff o this

BARBARA [*quite sunny and fearless*] What did you come to us for?

BILL. Aw cam for maw gel, see? Aw cam to tike her aht o this and to brike er jawr for er

BARBARA [*complacently*] You see I was right about your trade [*Bill, on the point of retorting furiously, finds himself, to his great shame and terror, in danger of crying instead He sits down again suddenly*]. Whats her name?

BILL [*dogged*] Er nime's Mog Ebbijem: thets wot her nime is.

BARBARA Mog Habbjam! Oh, she's gone to Canning Town, to our barracks there.

MAJOR BARBARA

BILL [*fortified by his resentment of Mog's perfidy*] Is she?
[*Vindictively*] Then Aw'm gowin to Kennintahn arter
her [*He crosses to the gate, hesitates; finally comes
back at Barbara*] Are you loyin to me to git shat o
me?

BARBARA I dont want to get shut of you I want to keep
you here and save your soul Youd better stay youre
going to have a bad time today, Bill

BILL Oo's gowin to give it to me? You, preps?

BARBARA Someone you dont believe in But youll be glad
afterwards

BILL [*slinking off*] Aw'll gow to Kennintahn to be aht o reach
o your tangle [*Suddenly turning on her with intense
malice*] And if Aw downt fawnd Mog there, Aw'll cam
beck and do two years for you, selp me Gawd if Aw
downt!

BARBARA [*a shade kinder, if possible*] It's no use, Bill She's
got another bloke

BILL Wot!

BARBARA One of her own converts He fell in love with
her when he saw her with her soul saved, and her face
clean, and her hair washed

BILL [*surprised*] Wottud she wash it for, the carrotty slat?
It's red

BARBARA It's quite lovely now, because she wears a new
look in her eyes with it It's a pity youre too late The
new bloke has put your nose out of joint, Bill

BILL Aw'll put his nowse aht o joint for him Not that
Aw care a carse for er, mawnd thet But Aw'll teach
'her to drop me as if Aw was dirt And Aw'll teach him
to meddle with maw judy Wots iz bleedin nime?

BARBARA Sergeant Todger Fairmile

SHIRLEY [*rising with grim joy*] I'll go with him, miss I want
to see them two meet I'll take him to the infirmary
when it's over

BILL [*to Shirley, with undissembled misgiving*] Is thet im you
was speakin on?

SHIRLEY Thats him

BILL Im that wiastled in the music awl?

MAJOR BARBARA

SHIRLEY The competitions at the National Sportin Club was worth nigh a hundred a year to him He's gev em up now for religion , so he's a bit fresh for want of the exercise he was accustomed to He'll be glad to see you Come along

BILL Wots is wight ?

SHIRLEY Thirteen four [*Bill's last hope expires*]

BARBARA Go and talk to him, Bill He'll convert you

SHIRLEY He'll convert your head into a mashed potato

BILL [*sullenly*] Aw aint afride of im Aw aint afride of ennybody Bat e can lick me She's dan me [*He sits down moodily on the edge of the horse trough*]

SHIRLEY You aint goin I thought not [*He resumes his seat*],

BARBARA [*calling*] Jenny !

JENNY [*appearing at the shelter door with a plaster on the corner of her mouth*] Yes, Major

BARBARA Send Rummy Mitchens out to clear away here

JENNY I think she's afraid

BARBARA [*her resemblance to her mother flashing out for a moment*] Nonsense ! she must do as she's told

JENNY [*calling into the shelter*] Rummy the Major says you must come

Jenny comes to Barbara, purposely keeping on the side next Bill, lest he should suppose that she shrank from him or bore malice

BARBARA Poor little Jenny ! Are you tired ? [*Looking at the wounded cheek*] Does it hurt ?

JENNY No it's all right now It was nothing

BARBARA [*critically*] It was as hard as he could hit, I expect Poor Bill ! You dont feel angry with him, do you ?

JENNY Oh no, no, no indeed I dont, Major, bless his poor heart ! [*Barbara kisses her , and she runs away merrily into the shelter Bill writhes with an agonizing return of his new and alarming symptoms, but says nothing Rummy Mitchens comes from the shelter*]

BARBARA [*going to meet Rummy*] Now Rummy, bustle Take in those mugs and plates to be washed , and throw the crumbs about for the birds

MAJOR BARBARA

Rummy takes the three plates and mugs ; but Shuley takes back his mug from her, as there is still some milk left in it

RUMMY There aint any crumbs. This aint a time to waste good bread on birds

PRICE [*appearing at the shelter door*] Gentleman come to see the shelter, Major Says he's your father

BARBARA All right Coming [*Snobby goes back into the shelter, followed by Barbara*]

RUMMY [*stealing across to Bill and addressing him in a subdued voice, but with intense conviction*] I'd av the lor of you, you flat eared pignosed potwalloper, if she'd let me Youre no gentleman, to hit a lady in the face [*Bill, with greater things moving in him, takes no notice*].

SHIRLEY [*following her*] Here ' in with you and dont get yourself into more trouble by talking

RUMMY [*with hauteur*] I aint ad the pleasure o being hintro-duced to you, as I can remember. [*She goes into the shelter with the plates*]

SHIRLEY Thats the—

BILL [*savagely*] D'ownt you talk to me, d'ye eah ? You lea me alown, or Aw'll do you a mischief Aw'm not dirt under your feet, ennywy

SHIRLEY [*calmly*] Dont you be afeerd You aint such prime company that you need expect to be sought after [*He is about to go into the shelter when Barbara comes out, with Undershaft on her right*]

BARBARA Oh, there you are, Mr Shirley ! [*Between them*] This is my father · I told you he was a Secularist, didnt I ? Perhaps youll be able to comfort one another.

UNDERSHAFT [*startled*] A Secularist ! Not the least in the world on the contrary, a confirmed mystic

BARBARA. Sorry, I'm sure By the way, papa, what is your religion ? in case I have to introduce you again.

UNDERSHAFT My religion ? Well, my dear, I am a Millionaire That is my religion.

BARBARA Then I'm afraid you and Mr Shirley wont be able to comfort one another after all Youre not a Millionaire, are you, Peter ?

SHIRLEY No ; and proud of it

MAJOR BARBARA

UNDERSHAFT [*gravely*] Poverty, my friend, is not a thing to be proud of

SHIRLEY [*angrily*] Who made your millions for you? Me and my like. Whats kep us poor? Keepin you rich. I wouldnt have your conscience, not for all your income

UNDERSHAFT I wouldnt have your income, not for all your conscience, Mr Shirley. [*He goes to the penthouse and sits down on a form*]

BARBARA [*stopping Shirley adroitly as he is about to retort*] You wouldnt think he was my father, would you, Peter? Will you go into the shelter and lend the lasses a hand for a while. we're worked off our feet

SHIRLEY [*bitterly*] Yes. I'm in their debt for a meal, aint I?

BARBARA Oh, not because youre in their debt, but for love of them, Peter, for love of them [*He cannot understand, and is rather scandalized*] There! dont stare at me. In with you; and give that conscience of yours a holiday [*bustling him into the shelter*]

SHIRLEY [*as he goes in*] Ah! it's a pity you never was trained to use your reason, miss. You'd have been a very taking lecturer on Secularism.

Barbara turns to her father.

UNDERSHAFT. Never mind me, my dear. Go about your work, and let me watch it for a while

BARBARA All right

UNDERSHAFT For instance, whats the matter with that outpatient over there?

BARBARA [*looking at Bill, whose attitude has never changed, and whose expression of brooding wrath has deepened*] Oh, we shall cure him in no time. Just watch. [*She goes over to Bill and waits. He glances up at her and casts his eyes down again, uneasy, but grimmer than ever*] It would be nice to just stamp on Mog Habbijam's face, wouldnt it, Bill?

BILL [*starting up from the trough in consternation*] It's a loy. Aw never said so. [*She shakes her head*] Oo taold you wot was in moy mawnd?

BARBARA Only your new friend.

MAJOR BARBARA

BILL Wot new friend ?

BARBARA The devil, Bill When he gets round people they get miserable, just like you

BILL [*with a heartbreaking attempt at devil-may-care cheerfulness*] Aw aint miserable [*He sits down again, and stretches his legs in an attempt to seem indifferent*].

BARBARA Well, if youre happy, why dont you look happy, as we do ?

BILL [*his legs curling back in spite of him*] Aw'm eppy enaff, Aw tell you Woy cawnt you lea me alown ? Wot ev I dan to you ? Aw aint smashed your fice, ev Aw ?

BARBARA [*softly - wooing his soul*] It's not me thats getting at you, Bill

BILL Oo else is it ?

BARBARA Somebody that doesnt intend you to smash women's faces, I suppose Somebody or something that wants to make a man of you

BILL [*blustering*] Mike a menn o me ! Aint Aw a menn ? eh ? Oo sez Aw'm not a menn ?

BARBARA Theres a man in you somewhere, I suppose But why did he let you hit poor little Jenny Hill ? That wasnt very manly of him, was it ?

BILL [*tormented*] Ev dan wiv it, Aw tell you Chack it Aw'm sick o your Jenny Ill and er silly little fice

BARBARA Then why do you keep thinking about it ? Why does it keep coming up against you in your mind ? Youre not getting converted, are you ?

BILL [*with conviction*] Not ME Not lawkly.

BARBARA Thats right, Bill Hold out against it Put out your strength Dont lets get you cheap Todger Fairmile said he wrestled for three nights against his salvation harder than he ever wrestled with the Jap at the music hall He gave in to the Jap when his arm was going to break But he didnt give in to his salvation until his heart was going to break Perhaps youll escape that You havnt any heart, have you ?

BILL Wot d'ye mean ? Woy aint Aw got a awt the sime as ennybody else ?

BARBARA A man with a heart wouldnt have bashed poor

MAJOR BARBARA

little Jenny's face, would he ?

BILL [*almost crying*] Ow, will you lea me alown ? Ev Aw ever offered to meddle with you, that you cam neggin and provowkin me lawk this ? [*He writhes convulsively from his eyes to his toes*]

BARBARA [*with a steady soothing hand on his arm and a gentle voice that never lets him go*] It's your soul thats hurting you, Bill, and not me Weve been through it all ourselves Come with us, Bill [*He looks wildly round*] To brave manhood on earth and eternal glory in heaven [*He is on the point of breaking down*] Come [*A drum is heard in the shelter, and Bill, with a gasp, escapes from the spell as Barbara turns quickly Adolphus enters from the shelter with a big drum*] Oh ! there you are, Dolly Let me introduce a new friend of mine, Mr Bill Walker This is my bloke, Bill Mr Cusins [*Cusins salutes with his drumstick*]

BILL Gowin to merry im ?

BARBARA Yes

BILL [*fervently*] Gawd elp im ! Gaw-aw-aw-awd elp im !

BARBARA Why ? Do you think he wont be happy with me ?

BILL Awve aony ed to stend it for a mawnin e'll ev to stend it for a lawftawm

CUSINS. That is a frightful reflection, Mr Walker But I cant tear myself away from her

BILL Well, Aw ken [*To Barbara*] Eah ! do you knaow where Aw'm gowin to, and wot Aw'm gowin to do ?

BARBARA Yes youre going to heaven, and youre coming back here before the week's out to tell me so

BILL You loy Aw'm gowin to Keninntahn, to spit in Todger Fairmawl's eye Aw beshed Jenny Ill's fice, an nar Aw'll git me aown fice beshed and cam beck and shaow it to er Ee'll itt me ardern Aw itt er Thatll mike us square [*To Adolphus*] Is thet fair or is it not ? Youre a genlmn you oughter knaow

BARBARA. Two black eyes wont make one white one, Bill

BILL. Aw didnt awst you Cawnt you never keep your mahth shat ? Oy awst the genlmn

MAJOR BARBARA

CUSINS [*reflectively*] Yes I think youre right, Mr Walker
Yes I should do it It's curious . it's exactly what an
ancient Greek would have done

BARBARA But what good will it do ?

CUSINS Well, it will give Mr Fairmile some exercise , and
it will satisfy Mr Walker's soul

BILL Rot ! there aint nao sach a thing as a saoul Ah kin
you tell wevver Awve a saoul or not ? You never seen
it

BARBARA. Ive seen it hurting you when you went against it

BILL [*with compressed aggrivation*] If you was maw gel and
took the word aht o me mahth lawk thet, Aw'd give
you sathink youd feel urtin, Aw would [*To Adolphus*]
You tike maw tip, mite Stop er jawr , or youll doy
afoah your tawm [*With intense expression*] Wore aht
thets wot youll be wore aht [*He goes away through
the gate*]

CUSINS [*looking after him*] I wonder !

BARBARA Dolly ! [*indignant, in her mother's manner*]

CUSINS Yes, my dear, it's very wearing to be in love with
you If it lasts, I quite think I shall die young

BARBARA Should you mind ?

CUSINS Not at all [*He is suddenly softened, and kisses her
over the drum, evidently not for the first time, as people
cannot kiss over a big drum without practice Undershaft
coughs*]

BARBARA It's all right, papa, weve not forgotten you
Dolly . explain the place to papa I havnt time [*She
goes busily into the shelter*]

*Undershaft and Adolphus now have the yard to them-
selves Undershaft, seated on a form, and still keenly
attentive, looks hard at Adolphus Adolphus looks hard
at him*

UNDERSHAFT I fancy you guess something of what is in
my mind, Mr Cusins [*Cusins flourishes his drumsticks
as if in the act of beating a lively rataplan, but makes no
sound*] Exactly so But suppose Barbara finds you
out !

CUSINS You know, I do not admit that I am imposing on

MAJOR BARBARA

Barbara I am quite genuinely interested in the views of the Salvation Army The fact is, I am a sort of collector of religions ; and the curious thing is that I find I can believe them all By the way, have you any religion ?

UNDERSHAFT Yes

CUSINS Anything out of the common ?

UNDERSHAFT Only that there are two things necessary to Salvation

CUSINS [*disappointed, but polite*] Ah, the Church Catechism.

Charles Lomax also belongs to the Established Church

UNDERSHAFT The two things are—

CUSINS Baptism and—

UNDERSHAFT No Money and gunpowder

CUSINS [*surprised, but interested*] That is the general opinion of our governing classes The novelty is in hearing any man confess it

UNDERSHAFT. Just so

CUSINS Excuse me is there any place in your religion for honor, justice, truth, love, mercy and so forth ?

UNDERSHAFT Yes they are the graces and luxuries of a rich, strong, and safe life

CUSINS Suppose one is forced to choose between them and money or gunpowder ?

UNDERSHAFT. Choose money and gunpowder, for without enough of both you cannot afford the others

CUSINS That is your religion ?

UNDERSHAFT Yes

The cadence of this reply makes a full close in the conversation Cusins twists his face dubiously and contemplates Undershaft Undershaft contemplates him

CUSINS Barbara wont stand that You will have to choose between your religion and Barbara

UNDERSHAFT So will you, my friend She will find out that that drum of yours is hollow

CUSINS Father Undershaft you are mistaken I am a sincere Salvationist You do not understand the Salvation Army It is the army of joy, of love, of courage : it has banished the fear and remorse and

MAJOR BARBARA

despair of the old hell-ridden evangelical sects it marches to fight the devil with trumpet and drum, with music and dancing, with banner and palm, as becomes a sally from heaven by its happy garrison. It picks the waster out of the public house and makes a man of him—it finds a worm wriggling in a back kitchen, and lo! a woman! Men and women of rank too, sons and daughters of the Highest. It takes the poor professor of Greek, the most artificial and self-suppressed of human creatures, from his meal of roots, and lets loose the rhapsodist in him, reveals the true worship of Dionysos to him, sends him down the public street drumming dithyrambs [*he plays a thundering flourish on the drum*].

UNDERSHAFT You will alarm the shelter.

CUSINS Oh, they are accustomed to these sudden ecstasies. However, if the drum worries you—[*he pockets 'he drum-sticks', unhooks the drum, and stands it on the ground opposite the gateway*].

UNDERSHAFT Thank you. And now to business.

CUSINS Pardon me. We are discussing religion. Why go back to such an uninteresting and unimportant subject as business?

UNDERSHAFT Religion is our business at present, because it is through religion alone that we can win Barbara.

CUSINS Have you, too, fallen in love with Barbara?

UNDERSHAFT Yes, with a father's love.

CUSINS A father's love for a grown-up daughter is the most dangerous of all infatuations. I apologize for mentioning my own pale, coy, mistrustful fancy in the same breath with it.

UNDERSHAFT Keep to the point. We have to win her, and we are neither of us Methodists.

CUSINS That doesn't matter. The power Barbara wields here—the power that wields Barbara herself—is not Calvinism, not Presbyterianism, not Methodism—

UNDERSHAFT Not Greek Paganism either, eh?

CUSINS I admit that Barbara is quite original in her religion.

MAJOR BARBARA

UNDERSHAFT [*triumphantly*] Aha ! Barbara Undershaft would be Her inspiration comes from within herself

CUSINS How do you suppose it got there ?

UNDERSHAFT [*in towering excitement*] It is the Undershaft inheritance I shall hand on my torch to my daughter She shall make my converts and preach my gospel—

CUSINS What ! Money and gunpowder !

UNDERSHAFT Yes, money and gunpowder Freedom and power Command of life and command of death

CUSINS [*urbanelly . trying to bring him down to earth*] This is extremely interesting, Mr Undershaft Of course you know that you are mad

UNDERSHAFT [*with redoubled force*] And you ?

CUSINS Oh, mad as a hatter You are welcome to my secret since I have discovered yours But I am astonished Can a madman make cannons ?

UNDERSHAFT. Would anyone else than a madman make them ? And now [*with surging energy*] question for question Can a sane man translate Euripides ?

CUSINS No.

UNDERSHAFT [*seizing him by the shoulder*] Can a sane woman make a man of a waster or a woman of a worm ?

CUSINS [*reeling before the storm*] Father Colossus—Mammoth Millionaire—

UNDERSHAFT [*pressing him*] Are there two mad people or three in this Salvation shelter today ?

CUSINS You mean Barbara is as mad as we are ?

UNDERSHAFT [*pushing him lightly off and resuming his equanimity suddenly and completely*] Pooh, Professor ! let us call things by their proper names I am a millionaire , you are a poet , Barbara is a savior of souls What have we three to do with the common mob of slaves and idolaters ? [*He sits down again with a shrug of contempt for the mob*]

CUSINS Take care ! Barbara is in love with the common people. So am I Have you never felt the romance of that love ?

UNDERSHAFT [*cold and sardonic*] Have you ever been in love with Poverty, like St Francis ? Have you ever been in

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love with Dirt, like St Simeon ? Have you ever been in love with disease and suffering, like our nurses and philanthropists ? Such passions are not virtues, but the most unnatural of all the vices. This love of the common people may please an earl's granddaughter and a university professor, but I have been a common man and a poor man, and it has no romance for me. Leave it to the poor to pretend that poverty is a blessing, leave it to the coward to make a religion of his cowardice by preaching humility. We know better than that. We three must stand together above the common people—how else can we help their children to climb up beside us ? Barbara must belong to us, not to the Salvation Army.

CUSINS Well, I can only say that if you think you will get her away from the Salvation Army by talking to her as you have been talking to me, you don't know Barbara.

UNDERSHAFT My friend I never ask for what I can buy.
CUSINS [*in a white fury*] Do I understand you to imply that you can buy Barbara ?

UNDERSHAFT. No, but I can buy the Salvation Army.

CUSINS. Quite impossible.

UNDERSHAFT You shall see. All religious organizations exist by selling themselves to the rich.

CUSINS. Not the Army. That is the Church of the poor.

UNDERSHAFT All the more reason for buying it.

CUSINS I don't think you quite know what the Army does for the poor.

UNDERSHAFT Oh yes I do. It draws their teeth : that is enough for me as a man of business.

CUSINS. Nonsense ! It makes them sober—

UNDERSHAFT I prefer sober workmen. The profits are larger.

CUSINS—honest—

UNDERSHAFT Honest workmen are the most economical.

CUSINS—attached to their homes—

UNDERSHAFT So much the better. They will put up with anything sooner than change their shop.

CUSINS—happy—

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UNDERSHAFT An invaluable safeguard against revolution.

CUSINS—unselfish—

UNDERSHAFT Indifferent to their own interests, which suits me exactly

CUSINS—with their thoughts on heavenly things—

UNDERSHAFT [*rising*] And not on Trade Unionism nor Socialism Excellent

CUSINS [*revolted*] You really are an infernal old rascal

UNDERSHAFT [*indicating Peter Shirley, who has just come from the shelter and strolled dejectedly down the yard between them*] And this is an honest man !

SHIRLEY Yes, and wot ev I got by it ? [*he passes on bitterly and sits on the form, in the corner of the penthouse*]

Snobby Price, beaming sanctimoniously, and Jenny Hill, with a tambourine full of coppers, come from the shelter and go to the drum, on which Jenny begins to count the money

UNDERSHAFT [*replying to Shirley*] Oh, your employers must have got a good deal by it from first to last [*He sits on the table, with one foot on the side form, Cusins, overwhelmed, sits down on the same form nearer the shelter Barbara comes from the shelter to the middle of the yard She is excited and a little overwrought*]

BARBARA We've just had a splendid experience meeting at the other gate in Cripps's lane I've hardly ever seen them so much moved as they were by your confession, Mr Price

PRICE I could almost be glad of my past wickedness if I could believe that it would elp to keep bathers stright

BARBARA So it will, Snobby. How much, Jenny ?

JENNY Four and tenpence, Major

BARBARA Oh Snobby, if you had given your poor mother just one more kick, we should have got the whole five shillings !

PRICE. If she heard you say that, miss, she'd be sorry I didnt. But I'm glad Oh what a joy it will be to her when she hears I'm saved !

UNDERSHAFT. Shall I contribute the odd twopence, Barbara ? The millionaire's mite, eh ? [*He takes a couple of pennies from his pocket*]

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BARBARA How did you make that twopence ?

UNDERSHAFT As usual. By selling cannons, torpedoes, submarines, and my new patent Grand Duke hand grenade

BARBARA Put it back in your pocket You cant buy your salvation here for twopence you must work it out

UNDERSHAFT Is twopence not enough ? I can afford a little more, if you press me

BARBARA Two million millions would not be enough. There is bad blood on your hands , and nothing but good blood can cleanse them Money is no use Take it away [*She turns to Cusins*] Dolly you must write another letter for me to the papers [*He makes a wry face*] Yes I know you dont like it , but it must be done The starvation this winter is beating us everybody is unemployed The General says we must close this shelter if we cant get more money I force the collections at the meetings until I am ashamed dont I, Snobby ?

PRICE It's a fair treat to see you work it, miss The way you got them up from three-and-six to four-and-ten with that hymn, penny by penny and verse by verse, was a caution Not a Cheap Jack on Mile End Waste could touch you at it

BARBARA Yes , but I wish we could do without it I am getting at last to think more of the collection than of the people's souls And what are those hatfuls of pence and halfpence ? We want thousands ! tens of thousands ! hundreds of thousands ! I want to convert people, not to be always begging for the Army in a way I'd die sooner than beg for myself

UNDERSHAFT [*in profound irony*] Genuine unselfishness is capable of anything, my dear

BARBARA [*unsuspectingly, as she turns away to take the money from the drum and put it in a cash bag she carries*] Yes, isnt it ? [*Undershaft looks sardonically at Cusins*]

CUSINS [*aside to Undershaft*] Mephistopheles ! Machiavelli !

BARBARA [*tears coming into her eyes as she ties the bag and*

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pockets it] How are we to feed them? I cant talk religion to a man with bodily hunger in his eyes
[*Almost breaking down*] It's frightful

JENNY [*running to her*] Major, dear—

BARBARA [*rebounding*] No dont comfort me It will be all right We shall get the money

UNDERSHAFT How?

JENNY By praying for it, of course Mrs Baines says she prayed for it last night, and she has never prayed for it in vain never once [*She goes to the gate and looks out into the street*]

BARBARA [*who has dried her eyes and regained her composure*] By the way, dad, Mrs Baines has come to march with us to our big meeting this afternoon, and she is very anxious to meet you, for some reason or other Perhaps she'll convert you

UNDERSHAFT I shall be delighted, my dear

JENNY [*at the gate excitedly*] Major! Major! heres that man back again

BARBARA What man?

JENNY The man that hit me Oh, I hope hes coming back to join us

Bill comes through the gate, his hands deep in his pockets and his chin sunk between his shoulders, like a cleaned-out gambler. He halts between Barbara and the drum

BARBARA Hullo, Bill! Back already!

BILL [*nagging at her*] Bin talkin ever sence, ev you?

BARBARA Pretty nearly Well, has Todger paid you out for poor Jenny's jaw?

BILL No he aint

BARBARA I thought your jacket looked a bit snowy

BILL So it is snaowy You want to know where the snaow come from, dont you?

BARBARA Yes

BILL Well, Awll teoll you [*Bill, being a cockney proletarian, pronounces I as ee-aw, and is himself called Beeyaw by his intimates*]

And what he tells her is this In a street in Canning Town, an

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eastern suburb of London where the main thoroughfare is broad and spacious but the people poor and the shops cheap, Todger Fairmile and Mog Habbijam are holding a Salvation Army meeting at a corner near a flourishing public house As it is Sunday morning the public house is closed, and Todger and Mog, being recent converts, have not yet found out that when its doors open it will profit by a crowd, no matter how that crowd has been induced to assemble It is an attractive meeting The brass band, ten strong, plays very handsomely, and its leader, who plays the soprano cornet (the old cornetto revived by the Army, and the most difficult instrument in the band) is quite a virtuoso Mog, a shapely lass with a natural border of red gold hair under her bonnet, is well worth looking at, and Todger, the ex-wrestler, in the prime of his athletic youth, is not a figure to be passed by without stopping on an idle Sunday morning The crowd is therefore not at all an exclusively pious one all sorts of people are looking and listening, except ladies and gentlemen, who are not indigenous in Canning Town—or Kennuntahn, as the natives call it Mog, radiant in the first flush of her conversion, is addressing it

MOG Dear friends : we shall have another hymn presently You dont know how it warms our hearts to hear so many of you joining in and knowing the dear words I want to share my happiness with you It is within your reach . you have only to stretch out your hands and take it. Listen to me, dear friends A month ago I was the unhappiest girl in London I wanted pleasure, pleasure, pleasure I drank . I swore I was unclean in my mind and in my body And I was so miserable that I would walk out with any man, if he had money enough to treat me in every public house we passed Not one of you would have let your daughters speak to me or your sons be seen with me I thought I was a grand girl enjoying myself all the time And I was lost and miserable, miserable, miserable One day when I went to a public house for another drink, I found an Army meeting going on outside

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Just as you have here I stopped to laugh and mock at it Just as some of you are stopping here today Do you know who was conducting that meeting? Here he is Sergeant Todger Fairmule the greatest fighter in the Isle of Dogs I laughed and mocked and put out my tongue at him ; but he saw how unhappy I was " You poor dirty unhappy little slut " he said " God has chosen you this day to have your sins cleansed and your soul lifted out of the mire of hell and saved " And he put his hand on me , and it was as strong as the hand of God, not because his hand is so strong, but because it was really the hand of God And from that hour heaven opened to me and I became as happy as an angel. Oh, dear friends, dont you envy me ? If that could happen to such a wretch as I was, how much more easily will it happen to you ! Dear Sergeant : tell them My heart's overflowing : I cant speak.

TODGER You all know who I am, Todger Fairmule, champion wrestler, boxer, and swimmer. Some of you have put money on me and won it

BYSTANDER Yes , and some of us put our money the other way and lost it

TODGER Youll lose no more that way : I shall ask you for a penny or two in the lass's tambourine presently Ive been promoted sergeant in the Salvation Army

ANOTHER BYSTANDER Yes : its easier than fighting, isnt it ?

TODGER No, my friend, it's not easier ; but it's ever so much happier And who told you that I have given up fighting ? I was born a fighter , and, please God, I'll die a fighter But the ring was too small for a champion like me. It was no satisfaction to me to knock out some poor fellow, or to get his shoulders down on the mat for a purse of money It was too easy , and there was no future in it for either of us, though we were both facing eternity One day I gave an exhibition spar for the benefit of a charity Our General was there , and I was introduced to her She said I was a wonderful young man , and she asked me was I saved

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"No" says I "but I can go fifteen rounds with Tommy Farr if you'll put up the money" "Of course you can," she says "God built you big enough for a trifle like that. But will you go, not fifteen rounds, but eternity, with the devil for no money at all? He is the champion the Army has to fight. Have you pluck enough for that?" I tried hard to make light of it, but it stuck; and a week after I took the count for the first time and joined up. And now I fight the devil all the time, and I'll say for him that he fights fairer and harder than some champions I have tackled. But God is against him. And in that sign we shall conquer. And now shall we have another hymn?"

He turns to the band who take up their instruments. The Salvationists open their hymnbooks.

While Todger's back is turned Bill Walker pushes his way through the crowd and takes Todger by the arm.

BILL You're Todger Firemaw, are you?

TODGER Sergeant Fairmile, at your service, sir.

BILL. You took awy 'maw Judy, did you? Nime of Mog Ebbjam.

MOG Bill!! Don't you know me?

BILL Blaow me! Its er voice. Wot ev you dan't'yseeawf? Wotz e dan to you?

MOG Sergeant it's Bill Walker, that was my bloke. And I'm so changed he doesn't know me.

TODGER We'll make the same change in you, Bill. Is that what you've come for?

BILL [*turning to Todger*] Awv cam to ev me fice chynged rawt enaff, an' you're the menn that's gaoin to chynge it. Tike thet [*He spits in Todger's face*] Nah, eah's maw jawr. Itt it. Itt it your best. Brike it.

TODGER Oh, that I should be found worthy to be spit upon for the Gospel's sake!

MOG You shouldn't have done that, Bill. You've spit in the face of your salvation.

BILL [*to Todger*] Listen eah you. D'yew knaoow a slip of a girl nimed Jinny Ill?

TODGER We do. Has she converted you?

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BILL Keep your mawnd orf this conversion business and listen to wot Awm teollin you. Aw browk Jinny Ill's jawr this mawnin

TODGER No you didnt, Bill. It's not so easy to break a jaw as you think You havnt the punch for it You hit her in the face like the fine bold fellow you are , and now you want to forgive yourself , and you find you cant unless I give you your blow back harder than you can hit. [*To the crowd*] Dear friends · this man is on the way to his salvation. Let us kneel down and pray for him [*The Salvationists kneel Bill and Todger remain standing*] Kneel down, Bill

BILL. [*furiously*] The hell I will !

Todger throws him down on his face ; and kneels on his shoulders. Mog kneels beside him. Both pray devoutly with bent heads while the band plays a hymn.

BILL Eah ! wot you think Awm mide of ?

MOG [*praying*] Oh Lord break his stubborn spirit , but dont urt iz dear eart

BILL [*scrambling up and feeling his ribs*] Never you mawnd maw deah awt. Wot abaht maw ribs ? you and your fourteen staown blowk ! [*Roar of laughter from the profane section of the crowd*] Larf awy : Aw see Aw kin git naow jastice eah Well, Aw'll settle wiv Jinny Ill in me aown wy, spawt o the lot o you. [*He elbows his way through the crowd, and trudges off on his way back to the West Ham shelter*].

And so ends Bill's account to Barbara of what happened to him in Canning Town as he told it to her and to the rest in the yard of the West Ham shelter.

BILL [*finishing his tale*] Sao naow you knaow all the good that move dan me

BARBARA [*her eyes dancing*] Wish I'd been there, Bill.

BILL. Yus youd a got in a hextra bit o talk on me, wouldnt you ?

JENNY. I'm so sorry, Mr Walker.

BILL [*fiercely*] Downt you gaow bein sorry for me . youve no call Listen eah Aw browk your jawr.

JENNY. No, it didnt hurt me indeed it didnt, except for a

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moment. It was only that I was frightened

BILL Aw downt want to be forgive be you, or be ennybody
Wot Aw did Aw'll py for Aw trawd to gat me aown
jawr browk to settisfaw you—

JENNY [*distressed*] Oh no—

BILL [*impatiently*] Teoll y' Aw did cawnt you listen to wots
bein taold you? All Aw got be it was bein mide a sawt
of in the publc street for me pines Weoll, if Aw cawnt
settisfaw you one wy, Aw ken anather Listen eah!
Aw ed two quid sived agen the frost, an Awve a pahnd
of it left A mite o mawn last week ed words with the
judy e's gaowin to merry E give er wot-for, an e's bin
fawnd fifteen bob E ed a rawt to itt er cause they was
gaowin to be merrid, but Aw ednt nao rawt to itt you,
sao put anather fawv bob on an call it a pahnd's worth
[*He produces a sovereign*] Eahs the manney Tike it,
and lets ev no more o your forgivin an pryin and your
Mijor jawrin me Let wot Aw dan be dan an pide for,
and let there be a end of it.

JENNY. Oh, I couldnt take it, Mr Walker But if you would
give a shilling or two to poor Rummy Mitchens! you
really did hurt her, and she's old

BILL [*contemptuously*] Not lawkly Aw'd give her anather
as soon as look at er Let her ev the lawr o me as she
threatened! She aint forgiven me not mach Wot
Aw dan to er is not on me mawnd—wot she [*indicating
Barbara*] mawt call on me conscience—no more than
stickin a pig It's this Christian gime o yours that Aw
wownt ev plyed agen me this bloomin forgivin an
neggin an jawrin that mikes a menn thet sore that iz
lawf's a burdn to im Aw waownt ev it, Aw teoll you,
sao tike your manney and stop thraowin your silly
barshed fice hap agen me

JENNY Major may I take a liddle of it for the Army?

BARBARA No the Army is not to be bought We want
your soul, Bill, and we'll take nothing less

BILL [*bitterly*] Aw knaow Me an maw few shillins is not
good enaff for you Youre a earl's grendorter, you
are Nathink less than a anderd pahnd for you

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UNDERSHAFT Come, Barbara! you could do a great deal of good with a hundred pounds. If you will set this gentleman's mind at ease by taking his pound, I will give the other ninety-nine.

Bill, dazed by such opulence, instinctively touches his cap

BARBARA Oh, you're too extravagant, papa. Bill offers twenty pieces of silver. All you need offer is the other ten. That will make the standard price to buy anybody who's for sale. I'm not, and the Army's not. [*To Bill*] You'll never have another quiet moment, Bill, until you come round to us. You can't stand out against your salvation.

BILL [*sullenly*] Aw cawnt stend aht agen music awl wrastlers and awtful tangued women. Aw've offered to py. Aw can do no more. Tike it or leave it. There it is. [*He throws the sovereign on the drum, and sits down on the horse-trough. The coin fascinates Snobby Price, who takes an early opportunity of dropping his cap on it*]

Mrs Baines comes from the shelter. She is dressed as a Salvation Army Commissioner. She is an earnest looking woman of forty, with a caressing, urgent voice, and an appealing manner.

BARBARA This is my father, Mrs Baines. [*Undershaft comes from the table, taking his hat off with marked civility*] Try what you can do with him. He won't listen to me, because he remembers what a fool I was when I was a baby. [*She leaves them together and chats with Jenny*]

MRS BAINES Have you been shewn over the shelter, Mr Undershaft? You know the work we're doing, of course.

UNDERSHAFT [*very civilly*] The whole nation knows it, Mrs Baines.

MRS BAINES No, sir. The whole nation does not know it, or we should not be crippled as we are for want of money to carry our work through the length and breadth of the land. Let me tell you that there would have been rioting this winter in London but for us.

UNDERSHAFT You really think so?

MRS BAINES I know it. I remember 1886, when you rich

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gentlemen hardened your hearts against the cry of the poor. They broke the windows of your clubs in Pall Mall

UNDERSHAFT [*gleaming with approval of their method*] And the Mansion House Fund went up next day from thirty thousand pounds to seventy-nine thousand ! I remember quite well

MRS BAINES Well, wont you help me to get at the people ? They wont break windows then Come here, Price. Let me shew you to this gentleman [*Price comes to be inspected*] Do you remember the window breaking ?

PRICE My ole father thought it was the revolution, maam

MRS BAINES Would you break windows now ?

PRICE Oh no, maam The windows of eaven av bin opened to me. I know now that the rich man is a sinner like myself.

RUMMY [*appearing above at the loft door*] Snobby Price !

SNOBBY. Wot is it ?

RUMMY Your mother's askin for you at the other gate in Cripps's Lane. She's heard about your confession [*Price turns pale*]

MRS BAINES Go, Mi Price, and pray with her

JENNY You can go through the shelter, Snobby

PRICE [*to Mrs Baines*] I couldnt face her now, maam, with all the weight of my sins fresh on me Tell her she'll find her son at ome, waitin for her in prayer [*He skulks off through the gate, incidentally stealing the sovereign on his way out by picking up his cap from the drum*].

MRS BAINES [*with swimming eyes*] You see how we take the anger and the bitterness against you out of their hearts, Mr Undershaft

UNDERSHAFT It is certainly most convenient and gratifying to all large employers of labor, Mrs Baines.

MRS BAINES. Barbara . Jenny . I have good news most wonderful news. [*Jenny runs to her*] My prayers have been answered I told you they would, Jenny, didnt I ?

JENNY Yes, yes

BARBARA [*moving nearer to the drum*] Have we got money

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enough to keep the shelter open ?

MRS BAINES I hope we shall have enough to keep all the shelters open Lord Saxmundham has promised us five thousand pounds—

BARBARA Hooray !

JENNY Glory !

MRS BAINES —if—

BARBARA “ If ! ” If what ?

MRS BAINES —if five other gentlemen will give a thousand each to make it up to ten thousand.

BARBARA. Who is Lord Saxmundham ? I never heard of him

UNDERSHAFT [*who has pricked up his ears at the peer's name, and is now watching Barbara curiously*] A new creation, my dear You have heard of Sir Horace Bodger ?

BARBARA Bodger ! Do you mean the distiller ? Bodger's whisky !

UNDERSHAFT That is the man. He is one of the greatest of our public benefactors He restored the cathedral at Hakington They made him a baronet for that He gave half a million to the funds of his party they made him a baron for that

SHIRLEY What will they give him for the five thousand ?

UNDERSHAFT There is nothing left to give him. So the five thousand, I should think, is to save his soul

MRS BAINES Heaven grant it may ! Oh Mr Undershaft, you have some very rich friends Cant you help us towards the other five thousand ? We are going to hold a great meeting this afternoon at the Assembly Hall in the Mile End Road. If I could only announce that one gentleman had come forward to support Lord Saxmundham, others would follow. Dont you know somebody ? couldnt you ? wouldnt you ? [*her eyes fill with tears*] oh, think of those poor people, Mr Undershaft think of how much it means to them, and how little to a great man like you

UNDERSHAFT [*sardonically gallant*] Mrs Baines : you are irresistible I cant disappoint you , and I cant deny

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myself the satisfaction of making Bodger pay up You shall have your five thousand pounds

MRS BAINES Thank God !

UNDERSHAFT You dont thank me ?

MRS BAINES Oh sir, dont try to be cynical dont be ashamed of being a good man The Lord will bless you abundantly , and our prayers will be like a strong fortification round you all the days of your life [*With a touch of caution*] You will let me have the cheque to shew at the meeting, wont you ? Jenny go in and fetch a pen and ink [*Jenny runs to the shelter door*]

UNDERSHAFT. Do not disturb Miss Hill . I have a fountain pen [*Jenny halts He sits on the table and writes the cheque Cusins rises to make room for him. They all watch him silently*]

BILL [*cynically, aside to Barbara, his voice and accent horribly debased*] Wot prawce selvytion nah ?

BARBARA Stop [*Undershaft stops writing they all turn to her in surprise*] Mrs Baines . are you really going to take this money ?

MRS BAINES [*astonished*] Why not, dear ?

BARBARA Why not ! Do you know what my father is ? Have you forgotten that Lord Saxmundham is Bodger the whisky man ? Do you remember how we implored the County Council to stop him from writing Bodger's Whisky in letters of fire against the sky , so that the poor drink-ruined creatures on the Embankment could not wake up from their snatches of sleep without being reminded of their deadly thirst by that wicked sky sign ? Do you know that the worst thing I have had to fight here is not the devil, but Bodger, Bodger, Bodger, with his whisky, his distilleries, and his tied houses ? Are you going to make our shelter another tied house for him, and ask me to keep it ?

BILL Rotten dranken whisky it is too.

MRS BAINES. Dear Barbara Lord Saxmundham has a soul to be saved like any of us If heaven has found the way to make a good use of his money, are we to set ourselves up against the answer to our prayers ?

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BARBARA I know he has a soul to be saved Let him come down here , and I'll do my best to help him to his salvation But he wants to send his cheque down to buy us, and go on being as wicked as ever

UNDERSHAFT [*with a reasonableness which Cusins alone perceives to be ironical*] My dear Barbara : alcohol is a very necessary article It heals the sick—

BARBARA It does nothing of the sort

UNDERSHAFT Well, it assists the doctor that is perhaps a less questionable way of putting it It makes life bearable to millions of people who could not endure their existence if they were quite sober It enables Parliament to do things at eleven at night that no sane person would do at eleven in the morning Is it Bodger's fault that this inestimable gift is deplorably abused by less than one per cent of the poor ? [*He turns again to the table , signs the cheque , and crosses it*].

MRS BAINES Barbara will there be less drinking or more if all those poor souls we are saving come tomorrow and find the doors of our shelters shut in their faces ? Lord Saxmundham gives us the money to stop drinking—to take his own business from him.

CUSINS [*impishly*] Pure self-sacrifice on Bodger's part, clearly ! Bless dear Bodger ! [*Barbara almost breaks down as Adolphus, too, fails her*]

UNDERSHAFT [*tearing out the cheque and pocketing the book as he rises and goes past Cusins to Mrs Baines*] I also, Mrs Baines, may claim a little disinterestedness. Think of my business ! think of the widows and orphans ! the men and lads torn to pieces with shrapnel and poisoned with lyddite ! [*Mrs Baines shrinks ; but he goes on remorselessly*] the oceans of blood, not one drop of which is shed in a really just cause ! the ravaged crops ! the peaceful peasants forced, women and men, to till their fields under the fire of opposing armies on pain of starvation ! the bad blood of the fierce little cowards at home who egg on others to fight for the gratification of their national vanity ! All this makes money for me . I am never richer, never busier than when the papers

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are full of it. Well, it is your work to preach peace on earth and goodwill to men. [*Mrs Baines's face lights up again*] Every convert you make is a vote against war [*Her lips move in prayer*] Yet I give you this money to help you to hasten my own commercial ruin [*He gives her the cheque*]

CUSINS [*mounting the form in an ecstasy of mischief*] The millennium will be inaugurated by the unselfishness of Undershaft and Bodger Oh be joyful ! [*He takes the drum-sticks from his pocket and flourishes them*].

MRS BAINES [*taking the cheque*] The longer I live the more proof I see that there is an Infinite Goodness that turns everything to the work of salvation sooner or later. Who would have thought that any good could have come out of war and drink ? And yet their profits are brought today to the feet of salvation to do its blessed work. [*She is affected to tears*]

JENNY [*running to Mrs Baines and throwing her arms round her*] Oh dear ! how blessed, how glorious it all is !

CUSINS [*in a convulsion of irony*] Let us seize this unspeakable moment Let us march to the great meeting at once Excuse me just an instant [*He rushes into the shelter Jenny takes her tambourine from the drum head*]

MRS BAINES Mr Undershaft have you ever seen a thousand people fall on their knees with one impulse and pray ? Come with us to the meeting Barbara shall tell them that the Army is saved, and saved through you

CUSINS [*returning impetuously from the shelter with a flag and a trombone, and coming between Mrs Baines and Undershaft*] You shall carry the flag down the first street, Mrs Baines [*he gives her the flag*] Mr Undershaft is a gifted trombonist : he shall intone an Olympian diapason to the West Ham Salvation March [*Aside to Undershaft, as he forces the trombone on him*] Blow, Machiavelli, blow

UNDERSHAFT [*aside to him, as he takes the trombone*] The trumpet in Zion ! [*Cusins rushes to the drum, which he takes up and puts on Undershaft continues, aloud*] I will do my best I could vamp a bass if I knew the tune

MAJOR BARBARA

CUSINS It is a wedding chorus from one of Donizetti's operas , but we have converted it. We convert everything to good here, including Bodger You remember the chorus " For thee immense rejoicing—immenso giubilo—immenso giubilo " [*With drum obbligato*]
Rum tum ti tum tum, tum tum ti ta—

BARBARA Dolly . you are breaking my heart

CUSINS What is a broken heart more or less here ? Dionysos Undershaft has descended. I am possessed.

MRS BAINES Come, Barbara I must have my dear Major to carry the flag with me

JENNY Yes, yes, Major darling

CUSINS [*snatches the tambourine out of Jenny's hand and mutely offers it to Barbara*]

BARBARA [*coming forward a little as she puts the offer behind her with a shudder, whilst Cusins recklessly tosses the tambourine back to Jenny, and goes to the gate*] I cant come

JENNY. Not come !

MRS BAINES [*with tears in her eyes*] Barbara . do you think I am wrong to take the money ?

BARBARA [*impulsively going to her and kissing her*] No, no God help you, dear, you must you are saving the Army. Go , and may you have a great meeting !

JENNY But arnt you coming ?

BARBARA No [*She begins taking off the silver S brooch from her collar*].

MRS BAINES Barbara what are you doing ?

JENNY Why are you taking your badge off ? You cant be going to leave us, Major

BARBARA [*quietly*] Father come here

UNDERSHAFT [*coming to her*] My dear ! [*Seeing that she is going to pin the badge on his collar, he retreats to the penthouse in some alarm*]

BARBARA [*following him*] Dont be frightened [*She pins the badge on and steps back towards the table, shewing him to the others*] There ! It's not much for £5000, is it ?

MRS BAINES Barbara if you wont come and pray with us,

MAJOR BARBARA

promise me you will pray for us

BARBARA I cant pray now. Perhaps I shall never pray again.

MRS BAINES Barbara !

JENNY. Major !

BARBARA [*almost delirious*] I cant bear any more Quick march !

CUSINS [*calling to the procession in the street outside*] Off we go Play up, there ! Immenso giubilo [*He gives the time with his drum , and the band strikes up the march, which rapidly becomes more distant as the procession moves briskly away*]

MRS BAINES. I must go, dear Youre overworked : you will be all right tomorrow We'll never lose you Now Jenny step out with the old flag Blood and Fire ! [*She marches out through the gate with her flag*]

JENNY Glory Hallelujah ! [*flourishing her tambourine and marching*]

UNDERSHAFT [*to Cusins, as he marches out past him easing the slide of his trombone*] " My ducats and my daughter " !

CUSINS [*following him out*] Money and gunpowder !

BARBARA Drunkenness and Murder ! My God why hast thou forsaken me ?

She sinks on the form with her face buried in her hands The march passes away into silence Bill Walker steals across to her

BILL [*taunting*] Wot prawce selvytion nah ?

SHIRLEY Dont you hit her when she's down.

BILL She itt me wen aw wiz dahn Waw shouldnt Aw git a bit o me aown beck ?

BARBARA [*raising her head*] I didnt take your money, Bill. [*She crosses the yard to the gate and turns her back on the two men to hide her face from them*]

BILL [*sneering after her*] Naow, it warnt enaff for you [*Turning to the drum, he misses the money*] Ellow ! If you aint took it sammun else ez Weres it gorn ? Bly me if Jenny Ill didnt tike it arter all !

RUMMY [*screaming at him from the left*] You lie, you dirty blackguard ! Snobby Price pinched it off the drum

MAJOR BARBARA

when he took up his cap I was up here all the time an see im do it

BILL Wot ! Stowl maw manney ! Waw didnt you call thief on him, you silly aold macker you ?

RUMMY To serve you aht for ittin me acrost the fice. It's cost y'pahnd, that az [*Raising a pæan of squalid triumph*] I done you I'm even with you Ive ad it aht o y— [*Bill snatches up Shirley's mug and hurls it at her She slams the loft door and vanishes The mug smashes against the door and falls in fragments*]

BILL [*beginning to chuckle*] Tell us, aol menn, wot o'clock this mawnin was it wen im as they call Snobby Prawce was sived ?

BARBARA [*turning to him more composedly, and with unspoiled sweetness*] About half past twelve, Bill And he pinched your pound at a quarter to two I know Well, you cant afford to lose it I'll send it to you

BILL [*his voice and accent suddenly improving*] Not if Aw wiz to stawve for it Aw aint to be bought

SHIRLEY Aint you ? Youd sell yourself to the devil for a pint o beer , ony there aint no devil to make the offer

BILL [*unshamed*] Sao Aw would, mite, and often ev, cheerful But she cawnt baw me [*Approaching Barbara*] You wanted maw saoul, did you ? Well, you aint got it

BARBARA I nearly got it, Bill But weve sold it back to you for ten thousand pounds

SHIRLEY And dear at the money !

BARBARA No, Peter it was worth more than money

BILL [*salvationproof*] It's nao good you cawnt get rahnd me nah Aw downt blieve in it , and Awve seen tody that Aw was rawt [*Going*] Sao long, aol soupkitchener ! Ta, ta, Mijor Earl's Grendorter ! [*Turning at the gate*] Wot prawce selvytion nah ? Snobby Prawce ! Ha ! ha !

BARBARA [*offering her hand*] Goodbye, Bill

BILL [*taken aback, half plucks his cap off ; then shoves it on again defiantly*] Git aht. [*Barbara drops her hand, discouraged He has a twinge of remorse*] But thets aw

MAJOR BARBARA

rawt, you knaow Nathink pasnl Naow mellice Sao
long, Judy [*He goes*]

BARBARA No malice So long, Bill

SHIRLEY [*shaking his head*] You make too much of him,
miss, in your innocence

BARBARA [*going to him*] Peter I'm like you now. Cleaned
out, and lost my job

SHIRLEY Youve youth an hope Thats two better than me

BARBARA. I'll get you a job, Peter Thats hope for you the
youth will have to be enough for me. [*She counts her
money*] I have just enough left for two teas at Lock-
harts, a Rowton doss for you, and my tram and bus
home. [*He frowns and rises with offended pride She
takes his arm*] Dont be proud, Peter it's sharing
between friends And promise me youll talk to me and
not let me cry [*She draws him towards the gate*]

SHIRLEY Well, I'm not accustomed to talk to the like of
you—

BARBARA [*urgently*] Yes, yes · you must talk to me. Tell
me about Tom Paine's books and Brādlaugh's lectures
Come along

SHIRLEY Ah, if you would only read Tom Paine in the
proper spirit, miss ! [*They go out through the gate
together*]

*Outside an unpretentious eating-house somewhere between
West Ham and London bridge. Customers entering and
leaving The winter evening has fallen and the street
lamps are alight The shops are lighted up. Barbara
and Shirley come out*

BARBARA I must say goodnight now, Peter Heres your
tramfare I'll walk home

SHIRLEY But you cant walk home . youre miles from your
home And youve had nothing in there except a cup
of tea Ive had to eat your food for you. Youve been
on your feet all day. You cant walk home on an empty
stomach

BARBARA If I feel tired I can take a taxi . there is plenty of

MAJOR BARBARA

money at home to pay for it. But I must be alone. I've things to think about. Dont mind my sending you away, Peter. I shall not forget my promise to get you a job

SHIRLEY I dont like leaving you I dont feel that youre fit to be left

BARBARA Thank you, dear Peter But it will be all right. I can take care of myself

SHIRLEY I'll bet you can Better than me Well, good-night; and thank you kindly for looking for the job for me I'll dye my hair this time.

BARBARA Yes, do, Peter Goodnight.

They shake hands, and Shirley goes his way Barbara stands a moment, thinking, then moves off

A wharf by the riverside Moonlight Tide flowing and rivercraft passing Barbara comes slowly to the brink, and gazes intently at the stream She takes off her bonnet, looks at it affectionately, kisses it and throws it into the river

A uniformed watchman hurries in and grips her arm

WATCHMAN Now then: whats the game? Ive been watching you I saw you throw your bonnet into the river Dont give your mind to throwing yourself after it and giving me the job of fishing you out, because you wont be let do it [*Shaking her arm*] See?

BARBARA [*smiling wanly*] That is what you thought, is it? Even if I wanted to throw away my own life, Ive no right to risk yours.

The Watchman, startled by her ladylike speech and manner, releases her arm, and steps back respectfully

WATCHMAN Youll excuse me, miss; but are you quite yourself this evening?

BARBARA I'm not at all sure. This morning I was Major Barbara of the Salvation Army in West Ham Now I'm only Miss Undershaft, of Stevenage House, Wilton Crescent. But you see Ive just drowned Major Barbara, so I suppose I must be Miss Undershaft Do you think I can find a taxi to take me home? Ive walked a long way, and become quite tired suddenly

MAJOR BARBARA

WATCHMAN There are no taxis about here : the best I can do for you is an ambulance The ambulance can carry you to the station They can telephone there to your home for somebody to take charge of you

BARBARA Thank you . if you'll be so good I'm quite sane and quite sober , but I've had a great shock today , and—and— [*she faints into the arms of the watchman*]

WATCHMAN [*saving her from falling*] Steady, miss, steady [*He eases her down on the flags, and kneels beside her He blows his whistle three times He feels her pulse. The ambulance arrives with two bearers, running*].

FIRST BEARER She's dry

SECOND BEARER She's dressed like a Salvation lass Where's her bonnet ?

WATCHMAN She hasn't been in the water . I stopped her just in time. It's only a faint. She's coming round Get her to the station as quick as you can Be civil to her : her people are big West End swells I'll telephone them. [*They lift Barbara on to the ambulance and carry her off*]

Meanwhile Undershaft and Cusins have spent the evening very differently The meeting to which they marched has been a great success Charrington's great hall in the Mile End Road is crowded , and the pavement outside is blocked by people waiting in vain for admission. Two Salvationists come from the hall and set up a huge placard inscribed THE HALL IS FULL. YOU CANNOT COME IN , BUT YOU CAN PRAY FOR US The people slowly turn away, disappointed

Inside the hall a combination of Salvation Army bands is accompanying the hymn "Climbing up the Golden Stairs," which the whole congregation is singing with impetuous enthusiasm. The General is standing in front of the platform, in the middle, not singing, but waiting for her turn Jenny Hill is singing frantically Cusins, in the middle of the back row, is leading the

MAJOR BARBARA

percussion, Undershaft is vamping a trombone accompaniment

At the end of the hymn the General raises her hand Immediately there is dead silence

THE GENERAL Friends we have a duty tonight which we must not forget. God has answered our prayers wonderfully by sending us a great gift : one that will enable us to get through many winters as bitter as this one has been without stinting one of His children of their little ration of bread and milk, or their warm blanket in the shelter You all know the name of the nobleman who, under God, was the instrument of the first half of that gift You will pray for him and rejoice in his salvation. You do not know the name of that other generous servant of God who has made up the whole sum for us , and I may not tell it to you. For he is one of those who does not let his right hand know what his left doeth. Friends : he is here among us tonight [*Tremendous applause*]. This afternoon, when he announced his magnificent offering to me, I exclaimed " Thank God ! " He smiled and said " You do not thank me." I told him to come to this meeting and he would hear how we thanked him. He has come , and you have kept my word for me. You may not know him on this side of the grave , but when we cross the river [*with a gesture*]*—over there—he will be with us still And we shall know him by the seal of God on his brow We will now sing our old favorite " Abide with me "*

All rise to begin the hymn. Undershaft steals away from the platform and disappears Cusins, his drum not being as appropriate to " Abide with me " as it was to the golden stairs, slips out after him

Both of them make for a greenroom where the tables and chairs and the hooks round the walls are heaped with the coats and wraps and hats of the choir

Undershaft throws his trombone on the pile of coats on the table, and is mopping his forehead with his handkerchief when Cusins arrives

MAJOR BARBARA

UNDERSHAFT. Phui ! This is more than I bargained for I can stand no more of it [*He snatches up his coat and hat from a chair, and puts them on*]. Come with me to my flat I have something to say to you.

CUSINS But I want to call at Wilton Crescent to ask if Barbara has got home safely.

UNDERSHAFT Never mind Barbara : she can look after herself Her uniform will protect her better than ten policemen. Come on. It is about Barbara I want to speak to you. [*He hurries out. Cusins has to do likewise*]

In the best room in Undershaft's very comfortable flat in Whitehall Court his valet is placing a tray of drinks on the sideboard There is a decanter of red wine, and another full of a fluid which deceptively resembles the purest sparkling water. A glowing fire warms the room pleasantly

Undershaft and Cusins come in, Undershaft pocketing his latchkey

CUSINS Nice and warm in here

UNDERSHAFT [*to the valet, who helps them to get rid of their greatcoats and headgear*] Any messages ?

THE VALET No, sir Anything to eat, sir ?

UNDERSHAFT No. Something to drink only

THE VALET All ready, sir

UNDERSHAFT [*to Cusins*] It was devilishly cold outside Try a nip of brandy Help yourself.

CUSINS Brandy ! Good gracious, no Lady Britomart is a temperance fanatic I am allowed nothing stronger than water [*He pours out a glass of the colorless fluid*] My throat is horribly dry. I dont know how to sing, and the effect of my attempts at the meetings is to give me incipient laryngitis. [*He swallows a liberal gulp of the fluid* Aow ! [*Choking*] Kkk ! What's this ? Oh Lord ! Red hot firewater Kkk ! Aow ! [*He throws what he has left in the glass into the fire, which flames up alarmingly*]

MAJOR BARBARA

UNDERSHAFT. Take care You will set the chimney on fire.

CUSINS It has set my throat on fire. What on earth is it?

UNDERSHAFT. It is only vodka · it wont hurt you.

CUSINS Give me something cold, for heaven's sake.

UNDERSHAFT [*pouring out a glass of the red wine*] Try my special temperance burgundy.

CUSINS [*swallows the whole glassful greedily*] !!!

UNDERSHAFT. Steady! Steady!

THE VALET Go easy with that, sir. Mr Undershaft calls it a temperance burgundy; but I should be sorry to venture on more than one glass of it myself.

CUSINS [*pouring himself out another glass*] Nonsense! After that fiery stuff it is like milk. [*He empties the glass*]. Ah! that's better

UNDERSHAFT Are you all right now?

CUSINS Perfectly

UNDERSHAFT Good. By the way, you wont mind my getting rid of this [*He takes the S brooch from his collar and throws it on the table*].

CUSINS That means you are getting rid of Barbara

UNDERSHAFT Not at all.

CUSINS Yes She has refused to swallow Bodger's whisky. Do you think she is any more likely to swallow your money and gunpowder?

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CUSINS [*somewhat aggressively He is no longer sober*] Do you think I dont know all about the mystical powers, Machiavelli ? You remember what Euripides says about your money and gunpowder ?

UNDERSHAFT. No. Does he mention me ?

MAJOR BARBARA

CUSINS [*declaiming*]

One and another
In money and guns may outpass his brother ;
And men in their millions float and flow
And seethe with a million hopes as leaven ,
And they win their will or they miss their will ;
And their hopes are dead or are pined for still ,
But whoe'er can know
As the long days go

That to live is happy, has found his heaven

Colloqually] My translation What do you think of it ?
UNDERSHAFT I think, my friend, that if you wish to know,
as the long days go, that to live is happy, you must
first acquire money enough for a decent life, and power
enough to be your own master

CUSINS You are damnably discouraging. [*Again declaiming*]

It is so hard a thing to see

The spirit of God, whate'er it be,
The Law that abides and changes not, ages long,
The Eternal and Nature-born . these things be strong ?
What else is Wisdom ? What of Man's endeavour,
Or God's high grace, so lovely and so great ?

To stand from fear set free ?

To breathe and wait ?

To hold a hand uplifted over Fate ?

And shall not Barbara be loved for ever ?

UNDERSHAFT. Euripides mentions Barbara, does he ?

CUSINS It is a fair translation The word means loveliness

UNDERSHAFT. May I ask, as Barbara's father, how much a
year she is to be loved for ever on ?

CUSINS. As Barbara's father, that is more your affair than
mine I can feed her by teaching Greek : that is about
all

UNDERSHAFT Do you consider it a good match for her ?

CUSINS [*with polite obstinacy*] Mr Undershaft . when I am
sober I am in many ways a weak, timid, ineffectual
person , and my health is far from satisfactory. At
present I am very far from sober, thanks to your
Intemperance Burgundy But, drunk or sober, when-

MAJOR BARBARA

ever I feel that I must have anything, I get it, sooner or later I feel that way about Barbara. I don't like marriage, I feel intensely afraid of it, and I don't know what I shall do with Barbara or what she will do with me, but I feel that I and nobody else must marry her. Please regard that as settled. Not that I wish to be arbitrary, but why should I waste your time in discussing what is inevitable?

UNDERSHAFT You mean that you will stick at nothing, not even the conversion of the Salvation Army to the worship of Dionysos

CUSINS The business of the Salvation Army is to save, not to wrangle about the name of the Pathfinder Dionysos or another what does it matter?

UNDERSHAFT [*taking Cusins affectionately by the shoulders*] Professor Cusins you are a young man after my own heart

CUSINS [*returning his embrace*] Mr Undershaft you are, as far as I am able to gather, a most infernal old rascal, but you appeal very strongly to my sense of ironic humor

UNDERSHAFT. Good We shall get on very well together Have you ever thought of going into business? My business. money and gunpowder? Barbara's money will come from it Why not help to earn it? Have you thought of that at all?

CUSINS Look here, Machiavelli. I am interested in thought reading, and have, in fact, made some experiments in it But I object to your trying it on me When my head is clear I will tell you exactly what I think Just at present I am delightfully drunk and happy And the room is very hot Might we have the window open for a moment?

UNDERSHAFT. Certainly [*Calling*] James! I should like a breath of fresh air myself [*To the Valet, who has come forward*] Draw back those curtains, and open the window, will you?

THE VALET [*doubtfully*] It's a very windy night, sir

UNDERSHAFT So much the better It's only for a minute to freshen the room

MAJOR BARBARA

The Valet draws the curtains apart and opens the window, which has no sash, and opens like double doors The wind rushes in.

CUSINS [*inhaling a full breath*] Oh, what a relief ! [*He reels*].

Hullo ! Wha's ma'er ? Room's going round.

UNDERSHAFT [*holding him up*] Steady, man, steady.

CUSINS Wha's 'appenning ? The waves, the waves How d'we get on ship ? [*Undershaft saves him from falling*].

Stea'y, Macklevelly, stea'y. Ha ! ha ! ha ! Fernal ole laskl , buppeal velly slongly my sense of ile—ile—ile— [*with a supreme effort to say it*] ilonnic humor

Ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! O ha ! ha ! ha ! ha ! ha !

UNDERSHAFT [*to the Valet*] Lend a hand, will you ?

THE VALET Right, sir.

UNDERSHAFT Get his feet on the rug the floor's like wax.

CUSINS [*quoting The Frogs, by Aristophanes*] Brekekekex co-ax co-ax Brekekekex co-ax

THE VALET. What's he trying to say, sir ?

UNDERSHAFT Greek, I expect Come come, Euripides ! Pull yourself together

CUSINS No, no, no 'Sglaceful Not Uhipplees, Alhs-loffnes Brekklekkex co-ax co-ax co— [*Calling*]

Steward ! [*Looking at the Valet*] Oh, there you are, steward Ole man dlunk, bline dlunk Purrimabed [*Sentimentally*] Be kind to him, steward Gooni' o' man Gooni', S'eward Gooni' Ni, ni [*he falls fast asleep ; and they have to let him down flat on the floor*].

UNDERSHAFT What the deuce are we to do with him ?

THE VALET [*dubiously*] I am afraid he's here for the night, sir

They carry him to bed

The dining room at Wilton Crescent next morning Breakfast is ready Morrison in attendance Lady Britomart comes in

LADY BRITOMART Nobody down yet !

MORRISON No, my lady

LADY BRITOMART Miss Barbara has gone, I suppose

MAJOR BARBARA

MORRISON No, my lady. Miss Barbara is not up yet.

LADY BRITOMART What ! Are you sure ?

MORRISON Quite sure, my lady Miss Barbara came in late last night and said she was not to be called

LADY BRITOMART Not to be called ! ! !

MORRISON Yes, my lady She said she was very tired and must have twelve hours sleep

LADY BRITOMART Was she quite well ?

MORRISON. A little pale, my lady, and without her bonnet I hadnt much time to notice , for she went straight upstairs, and left me to settle with the taxi and the policeman

LADY BRITOMART Policeman ! What are you talking about, Morrison ?

MORRISON. He came with her in the taxi. He asked questions, my lady Was she Miss Undershaft ? Was it all right ? And an account to settle for the taxi, and for an ambulance, and some tea at the police station I thought it best to pay and say nothing

LADY BRITOMART An ambulance ! There must have been some accident You are quite sure she was not hurt ?

MORRISON She seemed all right, my lady

LADY BRITOMART But you say she was brought home by a policeman

MORRISON I think he wanted to make sure who she was whether he had her name and address all right, as it were

LADY BRITOMART. Hm ! What have you laid all those covers for ? Have the young ladies invited anyone to breakfast ?

MORRISON You are expecting Mr Cusins and Mr Lomax, my lady. The car is ordered for half-past ten to take the party to—to—to—

LADY BRITOMART Well ? To where ?

MORRISON To Mr Undershaft's premises, I think, my lady

LADY BRITOMART To the factory, you mean ?

MORRISON [*apologetically*] Well, yes, my lady.

LADY BRITOMART. The factory pays your wages, Morrison

MORRISON Yes, my lady. That is what factories are for

MAJOR BARBARA

We must put up with them. Bacon and eggs, my lady, as usual ?

LADY BRITOMART No I'll have a sausage this morning
Morrison serves the sausage Lomax comes in

LADY BRITOMART You are late, Charles Where is Adolphus ?

LOMAX [*taking a seat at the table*] He will be here soon He was out all night He wasn't quite himself when he came home [*To Morrison*] Eggs and bacon, please [*He is served*].

LADY BRITOMART When you say he wasn't quite himself, Charles, what exactly do you mean ?

Cusins enters, in an ordinary lounge suit

LADY BRITOMART Good morning, Adolphus Charles was just telling me that when you came home this morning you were not quite yourself May I ask what was the matter with you ?

CUSINS [*taking his seat at the table*] Only a hangover [*To Morrison*] Coffee, please. Nothing to eat [*To Lady Britomart*] I got blind drunk last night

LADY BRITOMART Blind drunk ! ! !

CUSINS I went home with your husband Have you ever tasted vodka, Lady Brit ?

LADY BRITOMART. Certainly not

CUSINS It looks exactly like spring water The strongest spirits taste like milk after it

Sarah bounces in, fresh from her morning toilet

SARAH Good morning [*She kisses her mother, then kisses Lomax*] Morning, Dolly. [*To Morrison*] Buttermilk and kippers, please. [*She sits*]

CUSINS A new Spanish burgundy, warranted free from added alcohol . a Temperance burgundy in fact, finished me Its richness in natural alcohol made any addition superfluous

LOMAX You know, there is a certain amount of tosh about alcohol Burgundy is either burgundy or it isn't If it is, it's hot stuff unless you are used to it

CUSINS. Quite true. I've never been really drunk before. I rather liked it last night. I regret it now

MAJOR BARBARA

Barbara comes in, in ordinary dress, black and simple, contrasting with Sarah

BARBARA Good morning everybody [To Morrison] Porridge lots of porridge. And grape fruit I'm as hungry as a hunter.

LOMAX Oh, I say ! Youve chucked the uniform.

LADY BRITOMART You mean that Barbara has changed her dress, Charles Why not say so ?

LOMAX No I'm afraid I mean something more than that I mean she has chucked her salvation things

BARBARA Cholly means exactly what he says, mother. We are all going to the factory of money and gunpowder, death and destruction, on which we are living The uniform would be out of place there. Tell us about the meeting, Dolly.

CUSINS It was an amazing meeting. We prayed for Bodger it was most touching Then we prayed for the anonymous donor of the £5000 Your father would not let his name be given

LOMAX That was rather fine of the old man, you know Most chaps would have wanted the advertisement.

CUSINS He said all the charitable institutions would be down on him like vultures on a battlefield if he gave his name.

LADY BRITOMART That is Andrew all over. He never does a proper thing without giving an improper reason for it

CUSINS I cant blame him All my life Ive been doing improper things for proper reasons.

BARBARA Tell me the truth, Dolly. Were you really ever in earnest about the Army ? Would you have joined if you had never seen me ?

CUSINS Well—er— Well, possibly as a collector of religions—

LOMAX Not as a drummer though. You know, Dolly, you are a very clearheaded brainy chap ; and you must have felt what even I feel, that there is a certain amount of tosh about the Salvation Army. Now the claims of the Church of England—

LADY BRITOMART. Thats enough, Charles. Speak of something suited to your mental capacity

MAJOR BARBARA

LOMAX. But surely the Church of England is suited to all our capacities

LADY BRITOMART. That is its worst fault a thoroughly English one.

LOMAX. You are so awfully strongminded, Lady Brit

LADY BRITOMART. Dont dare to say so If there is one thing in the world that I am not, it is a strongminded woman

Morrison returns

LADY BRITOMART. What is it?

MORRISON. Mr Undershaft has just drove up to the door, my lady

LADY BRITOMART. Well, let him in.

MORRISON. Shall I announce him, my lady? or is he at home here in a manner of speaking?

LADY BRITOMART. That is a very difficult question, Morrison. What do you advise, Adolphus? You are his friend. you got drunk with him

CUSINS. I did not marry him. I tolerate him because he was the instrument of Barbara's birth, but to me he is the Prince of Darkness

LADY BRITOMART. You are getting drunker and drunker, Adolphus. Finish your breakfast and stop talking.

LOMAX. Has the old man a latchkey?

LADY BRITOMART. Another word, Charles, and I'll box your ears. What do you say, Sarah?

SARAH. As Morrison has raised the question I should leave him to solve it.

BARBARA. Of course. Morrison knows better than anybody. Dont you, Morrison?

MORRISON. Well, miss, the occasion is new to me. But as he has not come to breakfast, I could shew him into the library with your ladyship's leave

LADY BRITOMART. Yes, do, Morrison.

Morrison goes.

LADY BRITOMART. Children: go and get ready

BARBARA. Ive not finished my porridge.

LADY BRITOMART. Take it with you

Barbara does so and goes out with Sarah

LADY BRITOMART. Charles: tell Stephen to come to the

MAJOR BARBARA

library in five minutes or so

LOMAX Righto [*He goes*]

LADY BRITOMART I wish Charles would not say righto · we shall have Morrison saying it next Adolphus : are you sober enough to tell them to send round the carriage in fifteen minutes ?

CUSINS [*rising*] I will try I will take an emetic, I think

LADY BRITOMART Do, Adolphus : do

He goes

Meanwhile Morrison has gone down the grand stairs to the entrance hall and opened the hall door. Undershaft comes in

UNDERSHAFT Morning, Morrison You quite well, eh ?

MORRISON [*taking Undershaft's overcoat and hat*] Quite well thank you, sir Glad to see you home again, sir

UNDERSHAFT Home again ? Hm ! You are more at home here than I am by this time, eh ?

MORRISON Oh, I am only part of the house, sir.

UNDERSHAFT Where is her ladyship ?

MORRISON In the library, sir

UNDERSHAFT I forget where the library is Which door ?

MORRISON Where you were the night before last, sir. Shall I shew you ?

UNDERSHAFT [*following him*] Yes, yes. I am only a visitor here

Morrison leads the way upstairs to the library

MORRISON I will tell her ladyship, sir [*He closes the library door, leaving Undershaft alone*]

Undershaft examines the room like a stranger, making faces expressive of strong distaste. He hates the place

Lady Britomart bounces in Undershaft clears his countenance, and puts on his best husbandly manner

UNDERSHAFT Good morning, dear How fortunate to find you alone !

LADY BRITOMART. Dont be sentimental, Andrew Sit down. *They sit side by side on the settee*

LADY BRITOMART [*attacking instantly*] Sarah must have £800 a year until Charles Lomax comes into his property. Barbara will need more, especially if she has a lot of

MAJOR BARBARA

children , and she will need it permanently, because Adolphus is only a professor and hasnt any property

UNDERSHAFT [*resignedly*] Yes, my dear I will see to it Anything else ? for yourself, for instance ?

LADY BRITOMART I want to talk to you about Stephen

UNDERSHAFT [*rather wearily*] Dont, my dear Stephen doesnt interest me

LADY BRITOMART He does interest me He is our son

UNDERSHAFT Do you really think so ? He has induced us to bring him into the world , but he chose his parents very incongruously, I think I see nothing of myself in him, and less of you

LADY BRITOMART Andrew . Stephen is an excellent son, and a most steady, capable, highminded young man You are simply trying to find an excuse for disinheriting him

UNDERSHAFT My dear Biddy the Undershaft tradition disinherits him It would be dishonest of me to leave the cannon foundry to my son

LADY BRITOMART It would be most unnatural and improper of you to leave it to anyone else, Andrew Do you suppose this wicked and immoral tradition can be kept up for ever ? Do you pretend that Stephen could not carry on the foundry just as well as all the other sons of the big business houses ?

■UNDERSHAFT. Yes he could learn the office routine without understanding the business, like all the other sons , and the firm would go on by its own momentum until the real Undershaft—probably an Italian or a German—would invent something new, and cut him out

LADY BRITOMART There is nothing that any Italian or German could do that Stephen could not do. And Stephen at least has breeding

UNDERSHAFT The son of a foundling ! Nonsense !

LADY BRITOMART My son, Andrew ! And even you may have good blood in your veins for all you know

UNDERSHAFT True Probably I have That is another argument in favor of a foundling

LADY BRITOMART Andrew dont be aggravating And

MAJOR BARBARA

dont be wicked At present you are both

UNDERSHAFT This conversation is part of the Undershaft tradition, Biddy Every Undershaft's wife has treated him to it ever since the house was founded It is mere waste of breath If the tradition be ever broken it will be for an abler man than Stephen

LADY BRITOMART [*pouting*] Then go away.

UNDERSHAFT [*deprecatory*] Go away !

LADY BRITOMART Yes go away If you will do nothing for Stephen, you are not wanted here Go to your foundling, whoever he is , and look after him

UNDERSHAFT The fact is, Biddy—

LADY BRITOMART Dont call me Biddy I dont call you Andy

UNDERSHAFT. I will not call my wife Britomart · it is not good sense Seriously, my love, the Undershaft tradition has landed me in a difficulty. I am getting on in years , and my partner Lazarus has at last made a stand and insisted that the succession must be settled one way or the other Of course he is quite right But I havnt found a fit successor yet

LADY BRITOMART [*obstinately*] There is Stephen

UNDERSHAFT. Thats just it all the foundlings I can find are exactly like Stephen

LADY BRITOMART Andrew ! !

UNDERSHAFT. I want a man with no relations and no schooling that is, a man who would be out of the running altogether if he were not a strong man And I cant find him Every blessed foundling nowadays is snapped up in his infancy by Barnardo homes, or School Board officers, or Boards of Guardians , and if he shews the least ability he is fastened on by schoolmasters , trained to win scholarships like a racehorse , crammed with secondhand ideas , drilled and disciplined in docility and what they call good taste , and lamed for life. If you want to keep the foundry in the family, you had better find an eligible foundling and marry him to Barbara

LADY BRITOMART Ah ! Barbara ! Your pet ! You would sacrifice Stephen to Barbara

MAJOR BARBARA

children , and she will need it permanently, because Adolphus is only a professor and hasnt any property

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LADY BRITOMART Ah ! Barbara ! Your pet ! You would sacrifice Stephen to Barbara

MAJOR BARBARA

UNDERSHAFT Cheerfully And you, my dear, would boil Barbara to make soup for Stephen

LADY BRITOMART. Andrew this is not a question of our likings and dislikings it is a question of duty It is your duty to make Stephen your successor

UNDERSHAFT Just as much as it is your duty to submit to your husband Come, Biddy ! these tricks of the governing class dont go down with me I am one of the governing class myself , and it is waste of time giving tracts to a missionary I have the power in this matter ; and I am not to be humbugged into using it for your purposes

LADY BRITOMART Andrew you can talk my head off , but you cant change wrong into right And your tie is all on one side Put it straight

UNDERSHAFT [*disconcerted*] It wont stay unless it's pinned [*he fumbles at it with childish grimaces*]—

Stephen comes in.

STEPHEN [*at the door*] I beg your pardon [*about to retire*]

LADY BRITOMART No come in, Stephen [*Stephen comes forward to his mother's writing table*]

UNDERSHAFT [*not very cordially*] Good morning

STEPHEN [*coldly*] Good morning

UNDERSHAFT [*to Lady Britomart*] He knows all about the tradition, I suppose ?

LADY BRITOMART Yes [*To Stephen*] It is what I told you last night, Stephen

UNDERSHAFT [*sulkily*] I understand you want to come into the cannon business

STEPHEN I go into trade ! Certainly not.

UNDERSHAFT [*opening his eyes, greatly eased in mind and manner*] Oh ! in that case—

LADY BRITOMART Cannons are not trade, Stephen They are enterprise

STEPHEN I have no intention of becoming a man of business in any sense. I have no capacity for business and no taste for it I intend to devote myself to politics.

UNDERSHAFT [*rising*] My dear boy this is an immense relief to me And I trust it may prove an equally good thing

MAJOR BARBARA

for the country. I was afraid you would consider yourself disparaged and slighted [*He moves towards Stephen as if to shake hands with him*].

LADY BRITOMART [*rising and interposing*] Stephen . I cannot allow you to throw away an enormous property like this

STEPHEN [*stiffly*] Mother . there must be an end to treating me as a child, if you please [*Lady Britomart recoils, deeply wounded by his tone*]. Until last night I did not take your attitude seriously, because I did not think you meant it seriously . But I find now that you left me in the dark as to matters which you should have explained to me years ago . I am extremely hurt and offended . Any further discussion of my intentions had better take place with my father, as between one man and another

LADY BRITOMART Stephen ! [*She sits down again, her eyes filling with tears*]

UNDERSHAFT [*with grave compassion*] You see, my dear, it is only the big men who can be treated as children

STEPHEN I am sorry, mother, that you have forced me—

UNDERSHAFT [*stopping him*] Yes, yes, yes, yes : thats all right, Stephen. She wont interfere with you any more your independence is achieved . you have won your latchkey . Dont rub it in , and above all, dont apologize [*He resumes his seat*]. Now what about your future, as between one man and another—I beg your pardon, Biddy . as between two men and a woman

LADY BRITOMART [*who has pulled herself together strongly*] I quite understand, Stephen. By all means go your own way if you feel strong enough. [*Stephen sits down magisterially in the chair at the writing table with an air of affirming his majority*]

UNDERSHAFT. It is settled that you do not ask for the succession to the cannon business.

STEPHEN I hope it is settled that I repudiate the cannon business

UNDERSHAFT Come, come ! dont be so devilishly sulky . it's boyish. Freedom should be generous. Besides,

MAJOR BARBARA

I owe you a fair start in life in exchange for disinheriting you. You cant become prime minister all at once Havnt you a turn for something ? What about literature, art, and so forth ?

STEPHEN I have nothing of the artist about me, either in faculty or character, thank Heaven !

UNDERSHAFT A philosopher, perhaps ? Eh ?

STEPHEN I make no such ridiculous pretension

UNDERSHAFT Just so Well, there is the army, the navy, the Church, the Bar The Bar requires some ability What about the Bar ?

STEPHEN. I have not studied law And I am afraid I have not the necessary push—I believe that is the name barristers give to their vulgarity—for success in pleading

UNDERSHAFT. Rather a difficult case, Stephen Hardly anything left but the stage, is there ? [*Stephen makes an impatient movement*] Well, come ! is there anything you know or care for ?

STEPHEN [*rising and looking at him steadily*] I know the difference between right and wrong

UNDERSHAFT [*hugely tickled*] You dont say so ! What ! no capacity for business, no knowledge of law, no sympathy with art, no pretension to philosophy ; only a simple knowledge of the secret that has puzzled all the philosophers, baffled all the lawyers, muddled all the men of business, and ruined most of the artists . the secret of right and wrong Why, man, youre a genius, a master of masters, a god ! At twentyfour, too !

STEPHEN [*keeping his temper with difficulty*] You are pleased to be facetious. I pretend to nothing more than any honorable English gentleman claims as his birthright [*he sits down angrily*]

UNDERSHAFT Oh, thats everybody's birthright Look at poor little Jenny Hill, the Salvation lassie ! she would think you were laughing at her if you asked her to stand up in the street and teach grammar or geography or mathematics or even drawing room dancing ; but it never occurs to her to doubt that she can teach morals and religion. You are all alike, you respectable people.

MAJOR BARBARA

You cant tell me the bursting strain of a ten-inch gun, which is a very simple matter , but you all think you can tell me the bursting strain of a man under temptation You darent handle high explosives , but youre all ready to handle honesty and truth and justice and the whole duty of man, and kill one another at that game What a country ! What a world !

LADY BRITOMART [*uneasily*] What do you think he had better do, Andrew ?

UNDERSHAFT Oh, just what he wants to do He knows nothing and he thinks he knows everything That points clearly to a political career Get him a private secretaryship to someone who can get him an Under Secretaryship , and then leave him alone He will find his natural and proper place in the end on the Treasury Bench

STEPHEN [*springing up again*] I am sorry, sir, that you force me to forget the respect due to you as my father I am an Englishman and I will not hear the Government of my country insulted [*He thrusts his hands in his pockets, and walks angrily across to the window*]

UNDERSHAFT [*with a touch of brutality*] The government of your country ! I am the government of your country I, and Lazarus Do you suppose that you and half a dozen amateurs like you, sitting in a row in that foolish gabble shop, can govern Undershaft and Lazarus ? No, my friend : you will do what pays us You will make war when it suits us, and keep peace when it doesnt You will find out that trade requires certain measures when we have decided on those measures. When I want anything to keep my dividends up, you will discover that my want is a national need When other people want something to keep my dividends down, you will call out the police and military. And in return you shall have the support and applause of my newspapers, and the delight of imagining that you are a great statesman. Government of your country ! Be off with you, my boy, and play with your caucuses and leading articles and historic parties and great

MAJOR BARBARA

leaders and burning questions and the rest of your toys
I am going back to my counting-house to pay the piper
and call the tune.

STEPHEN [*actually smiling, and putting his hand on his father's shoulder with indulgent patronage*] Really, my dear father, it is impossible to be angry with you. You don't know how absurd all this sounds to me. You are very properly proud of having been industrious enough to make money, and it is greatly to your credit that you have made so much of it. But it has kept you in circles where you are valued for your money and deferred to for it, instead of in the doubtless very old-fashioned and behind-the-times public school and university where I formed my habits of mind. It is natural for you to think that money governs England, but you must allow me to think I know better.

UNDERSHAFT. And what does govern England, pray?

STEPHEN. Character, father, character.

UNDERSHAFT. Whose character? Yours or mine?

STEPHEN. Neither yours nor mine, father, but the best elements in the English national character.

UNDERSHAFT. Stephen. I've found your profession for you. You're a born journalist. I'll start you with a high-toned weekly review. There!

Before Stephen can reply Sarah, Barbara, Lomax, and Cusins come in ready for walking. Barbara crosses the room to the window and looks out. Cusins drifts amiably to the armchair. Lomax remains near the door, whilst Sarah comes to her mother.

Stephen goes to the smaller writing table and busies himself with his letters.

SARAH. Go and get ready, mamma. The car is waiting.
Lady Brutomart leaves the room.

UNDERSHAFT [*to Sarah*]. Good day, my dear. Good morning, Mr Lomax.

LOMAX [*vaguely*]. Ahdedoo.

UNDERSHAFT [*to Cusins*]. Quite well after last night, Eurypides, eh?

CUSINS. As well as can be expected.

MAJOR BARBARA

UNDERSHAFT That's right [*To Barbara*] So you are coming to see my death and devastation factory, Barbara ?

BARBARA [*at the window*] You came yesterday to see my salvation factory I promised you a return visit.

LOMAX [*coming forward between Sarah and Undershaft*] You'll find it awfully interesting I've been through the Woolwich Arsenal, and it gives you a ripping feeling of security, you know, to think of the lot of beggars we could kill if it came to fighting [*To Undershaft, with sudden solemnity*] Still, it must be rather an awful reflection for you, from the religious point of view as it were You're getting on, you know, and all that

SARAH You don't mind Cholly, papa, do you ?

LOMAX [*much taken aback*] Oh I say !

UNDERSHAFT Mr Lomax looks at the matter in a very proper spirit, my dear

LOMAX Just so That's all I meant, I assure you

SARAH Are you coming, Stephen ?

STEPHEN Well, I am rather busy—er— [*Magnanimously*] Oh well, yes I'll come That is, if there is room for me

UNDERSHAFT I can take two with me in a little motor I am experimenting with for field use You won't mind its being rather unfashionable It's not painted yet, but it's bullet proof

LOMAX [*appalled at the prospect of confronting Wilton Crescent in an unpainted motor*] Oh I say !

SARAH Our own car for me, thank you Barbara doesn't mind what she's seen in

LOMAX I say, Dolly, old chap do you really mind the car being a guy ? Because of course if you do I'll go in it Still—

CUSINS I prefer it

LOMAX Thanks awfully, old man Come, my ownest [*He hurries out Sarah follows him*]

CUSINS [*moodily walking across to Lady Britomart's writing table*] Why are we two coming to this Works Department of Hell ? that is what I ask myself

BARBARA I have always thought of it as a sort of pit where lost creatures with blackened faces stirred up smoky

MAJOR BARBARA

fires and were driven and tormented by my father.
Is it like that, dad ?

UNDERSHAFT [*scandalized*] My dear ! It is a spotlessly clean and beautiful hillside town

CUSINS With a Methodist chapel ? Oh do say theres a Methodist chapel

UNDERSHAFT There are several, all of different persuasions
My men are all strongly religious In the High Explosives Sheds they object to the presence of Agnostics as unsafe.

BARBARA And yet they obey all your orders ?

UNDERSHAFT I never give them any orders When I speak to one of them it is " Well, Jones, is the baby doing well ? and has Mrs Jones made a good recovery ? " " Nicely, thank you, sir " And thats all

CUSINS But Jones has to be kept in order How do you maintain discipline among your men ?

UNDERSHAFT I dont They do. You see, the one thing Jones wont stand is any rebellion from the man under him, or any assertion of social equality between the wife of the man with 4 shillings a week less than himself, and Mrs Jones ! Of course they all rebel against me, theoretically. Practically, every man of them keeps the man just below him in his place I never meddle with them I never bully them I dont even bully Lazarus I say that certain things are to be done , but I dont order anybody to do them I dont say, mind you, that there is no ordering about and snubbing and even bullying The men snub the boys and order them about , the carmen snub the sweepers , the artisans snub the unskilled laborers , the foremen drive and bully both the laborers and artisans ; the assistant engineers find fault with the foremen ; the chief engineers drop on the assistants , the departmental managers worry the chiefs , and the clerks have tall hats and hymnbooks and keep up the social tone by refusing to associate on equal terms with anybody The result is a considerable profit, some of which is spent in this house.

MAJOR BARBARA

CUSINS [*revolted*] You really are a—well, what I was saying yesterday

BARBARA What was he saying yesterday ?

UNDERSHAFT. Never mind, my dear He thinks I have made you unhappy Have I ?

BARBARA Do you think I can be happy in this vulgar silly dress ? I ! who have worn the uniform. Do you understand what you have done to me ? Yesterday I had a man's soul in my hand I set him in the way of life with his face to salvation But when we took your money he turned back to drunkenness and derision [*With intense conviction*] I will never forgive you that If I had a child, and you destroyed its body with your explosives—if you murdered Dolly with your horrible guns—I could forgive you if my forgiveness would open the gates of heaven to you But to take a human soul from me, and turn it into the soul of a wolf ! that is worse than any murder

UNDERSHAFT Does my daughter despair so easily ? Can you strike a man to the heart and leave no mark on him ?

BARBARA [*her face lighting up*] Oh, you are right he can never be lost now where was my faith ?

CUSINS Oh, clever clever devil !

BARBARA You may be a devil, but God speaks through you sometimes [*She takes her father's hands and kisses them*] You have given me back my happiness I feel it deep down now, though my spirit is troubled

UNDERSHAFT You have learnt something That always feels at first as if you had lost something

BARBARA Well, take me to the factory of death, and let me learn something more There must be some truth or other behind all this frightful irony Come, Dolly. [*She goes out*].

CUSINS My guardian angel ! [*To Undershaft*] Avaunt ! [*He follows Barbara*]

STEPHEN [*quietly, at the writing table*] You must not mind Cusins, father He is a very amiable good fellow ; but he is a Greek scholar and naturally a little eccentric

MAJOR BARBARA

UNDERSHAFT Ah, quite so Thank you, Stephen Thank you [He goes out]

Stephen smiles patronizingly, buttons his coat responsibly, and crosses the room to the door Lady Britomart, dressed for out-of-doors, opens it before he reaches it She looks round for the others, looks at Stephen, and turns to go without a word

STEPHEN [embarrassed] Mother—

LADY BRITOMART Dont be apologetic, Stephen And dont forget that you have outgrown your mother [She goes out]

The entrance hall They all come downstairs in the order in which they left the library Morrison is waiting for them, and nothing is said while the men get into their overcoats and hats, with Morrison helping Undershaft When they are all ready Morrison opens the door and finds an armored car waiting

MORRISON [authoritatively] Higher up, please, higher up You cant park yourself here

UNDERSHAFT All right, all right That is my car, Morrison

MORRISON I beg your pardon, sir

UNDERSHAFT Room for two besides myself My dear—

LADY BRITOMART Most certainly not I go in my own car Take Barbara and Adolphus they are accustomed to disreputable conveyances

UNDERSHAFT Can you drive a car, Mr Lomax ?

LOMAX Ra-therrr.

LADY BRITOMART Andrew have you no regard for your children's lives ? His licence was endorsed last week for driving to the public danger with his arm round Sarah

LOMAX But I assure you I can drive quite safely with one hand

LADY BRITOMART Possibly But you cannot see your way safely through the traffic in Knightsbridge while you are kissing Sarah The magistrate said so, and I agree with the magistrate You and Sarah will come in my car, and I shall sit between you Stephen will sit in front Now dont dawdle

Sarah, Lomax and Stephen obediently hurry out.

MAJOR BARBARA

LADY BRITOMART The military lorry will have to shew us the way—unless you two are frozen to death in it
[She goes out]

UNDERSHAFT *[to Barbara]* It is not a military lorry, my dear
You will be quite comfortable
Barbara and Adolphus go out

UNDERSHAFT *[following]* Good morning, Morrison

MORRISON Shall we see you again this evening, sir? I have your room ready for you, sir

UNDERSHAFT *[dashing out]* No, by George! Goodbye

MORRISON *[regretfully]* Goodbye, sir

Left alone, Morrison shuts the door and throws off his professional manner. He shakes his head over the unfortunate domestic incompatibility of the heads of the household, then takes a newspaper from the hall table, and goes off to have an easy time in his own quarters

A road skirting a green hill, up the opposite slopes of which, parallel to the road, runs what appears to be a white wall, ending at the top in a tower with steps winding up it spirally. In enormous black letters on the white wall are the names UNDERSHAFT up one side and LAZARUS down the other

Along the road come Undershaft's armored car followed by Lady Britomart's limousine. The limousine stops, honking violently. The armored car stops. The occupants alight, except Lady Britomart

UNDERSHAFT What is the matter? Have you broken down?
LOMAX *[who has a camera in his hand]* Sorry to stop you, but Sarah wants a photograph of your shop front

BARBARA So do I. I shall send it to the Society for saving our countryside from disfiguring advertisements. This is the whited wall in the Bible. How could you spoil that hill with it merely to flaunt your name on it?

LADY BRITOMART *[putting her head out of the window of the limousine]* You must have all that knocked down and taken away instantly, Andrew. I will not have our name daubed all over the home counties

MAJOR BARBARA

UNDERSHAFT They are not walls, my love They are the chimneys of my smelting works. When they are swept twice a year we get some tons of silver out of the soot, which is quite clean and white. The name of the firm can be read for ten miles with a good glass it is one of the sights of the county People feel as Sarah does that they must photograph it. For twenty square miles you cannot escape from it. The advertisement is worth several thousands a year to us, and, incidentally, my dear, to you.

LADY BRITOMART In short, you did it for our sakes.

UNDERSHAFT No for the sake of the firm Everything is for the sake of the firm here

LOMAX Sort of Totalitarian State, what ?

UNDERSHAFT. Precisely, Mr Lomax.

LADY BRITOMART. Monstrous. [*She disappears into the limousine*]

SARAH. Was Lazarus a foundling, papa ? Why did they give him a Jewish name ?

UNDERSHAFT. Oh no. The Undershafes are the foundlings. It is part of the tradition that they should take a partner with a Jewish name It suggests financial ability, and he gets all the blame when our profits are considered exorbitant

CUSINS. A scapegoat, then ?

UNDERSHAFT Exactly . a scapegoat.

CUSINS That is the role of the Jew in modern Capitalism.

UNDERSHAFT Yes , but it was an Undershaft invention. Most of these notions are.

LADY BRITOMART [*reappearing*] If you dont drive on I will get out and walk I will not sit here listening to Andrew glorying in his wickedness
Her children scramble back to their cars

LOMAX. Righto ! [*He gets in*]

CUSINS [*with one foot on the step of the armored car*] I must allow myself to point out, Machiavelli, that the adoption plan is not only an Undershaft tradition . it is a Japanese custom [*He gets in*].

UNDERSHAFT It is a very sensible one. We have a Japanese

MAJOR BARBARA

temple in the village The Shinto religion suits us exactly I, of course, am its Mikado [*He gets in*]
The cars move off, and arrive presently at the works of Undershaft and Lazarus in a forest of cranes and huge tubular metal structures of one sort or another Factory and office buildings all about
Undershaft and his family alight with their betrothed, and stare about them at the labyrinth of buildings and monster tubes

LADY BRITOMART I refuse to walk another step through all these sheds and pipes and boilers They mean nothing to me I have never asked you to come and look at the kitchen range and the scullery sink Why is that roof making noises like a whale with asthma ?

UNDERSHAFT. It is breathing, my love.

LADY BRITOMART What is it breathing ?

UNDERSHAFT Just what you are breathing Common air
LOMAX. Arent you overdoing this ventilation business a bit ?
Sarah inherits that from you she is crazy on open windows I am always telling her that there is a certain amount of tosh about fresh air I say shut your windows and stop blowing your nose

SARAH Shut up, Cholly A handkerchief lasts me a week : it lasts you half a day

LADY BRITOMART You have been brought up stuffily, Charles My daughters are fresh air girls. I hope Andrew appreciates that fact

UNDERSHAFT Come in and see what this shed does with the air it breathes It is worth seeing

They go into the shed, Cusins bringing up the rear with Undershaft

CUSINS. Nitrogen from the air, I suppose ?

UNDERSHAFT. Yes Salts of ammonia

They follow the others in.

The interior of the shed is like a scene in a pantomime representing a Snow King's cave. It rains sulphate of ammonia

LADY BRITOMART This is ridiculous. Is it snow, or salt, or what ?

MAJOR BARBARA

CUSINS Nitrates to make explosives

UNDERSHAFT Or sulphates to fertilize the fields your farmers are exhausting and destroying You can use them both ways If you prefer explosives that is your affair, not mine

CUSINS And it took a European war to stir mankind up to discover how to get harvests from the air !

LADY BRITOMART Dont be wicked, Adolphus You are encouraging Andrew This is rather pretty, and no doubt very wonderful , but it is immoral , and I refuse to admire it I have had enough of this I am going home

UNDERSHAFT Not yet, my love You must see where our men live [*Leading the way out*] Come, Euripides you think that nitrates are good for nothing but death. You shall see the sort of life they produce

They go out, Lady Britomart coming last with Stephen

LADY BRITOMART Stephen you have not uttered a single word since we arrived Do you want your father to think you have nothing to say about those dreadful names across the hill ?

STEPHEN I thought at first that they were in horribly bad taste But somehow the place is very wonderful Undershaft and Lazarus are very big people I had rather say nothing until I have seen everything

He goes out, his mother following, shaking her head , for he is impressed and shaken, and shews it

A grand square The buildings are churches and temples in various styles of architecture There is a Russian Greek Church brilliantly tinselled, a mosque, a Shinto temple, an Indian Jain temple, various Free Church meeting houses, two Church of England edifices, Protestant with spire and Anglican with tower, and a Roman Catholic church in Italian XII century taste with Virgin and crosses And there is a round Labor Church, with the inscription "NO MAN IS GOOD ENOUGH TO BE ANOTHER MAN'S MASTER"

Undershaft and his party arrive

MAJOR BARBARA

CUSINS What on earth is all this ?

UNDERSHAFT Its official name is The Meeting Place of All the Religions But as that is too long a title for everyday use the men call it Piety Square

LADY BRITOMART You should not allow it, Andrew You should learn how to keep your employees in order

BARBARA Is the real meeting place of all the religions a cannon foundry ?

UNDERSHAFT Yes : they are all agreed on that You are yourself a major in a fighting army

BARBARA I am nothing now When I fought it was to fight the devil, not to kill

UNDERSHAFT Fighting that is not to kill is not fighting at all And they all call their adversaries the devil There is a Salvation barracks here for you, if you wish, dear And you, Euripides, shall have a temple of Dionysos Or perhaps a little private oratory at the back of your office

CUSINS My office ! What do you mean ?

UNDERSHAFT Pardon I forgot that we have not come to that yet The remark was prophetic Shall we have a closer look at the buildings ?

SARAH Whats the Indian one ? May we go in ?

UNDERSHAFT It is a Jain temple : a reproduction of the most famous one in the world You may not worship there without washing yourself all over , but you can see everything quite well without overstepping the thresholds of the shrines

SARAH Let us go in I think I should like to be a Jain

LOMAX [*sings*] My Jane, my Jane, my pretty Jane, why dost thou look so shy ?

LADY BRITOMART Will nothing make you behave yourself, Charles ? Remember that this is a sacred place, though the misguided worshippers are heathen idolators

They go into the temple, and stop before one of the shrines, in which is a seated image It fascinates them

BARBARA How utterly wonderful ! Perfect peace ! Perfect beauty ! I think I shall become a Jain too What god is it ?

MAJOR BARBARA

UNDERSHAFT. It is not a god It is supposed to be only a wiseacre of some sort , but it is really a symbol. I am afraid it is worshipped and prayed to as a god, though the Jains hold that God is something beyond us with which they dare not meddle

LOMAX [*even he is impressed*] It's quite awfully peaceful
Bad for the cannon trade, though, isn't it ?

UNDERSHAFT Not at all We made these figures here

CUSINS. You made those marvellous figures ! I refuse to believe it

UNDERSHAFT One of our troubles here used to be the waste of good gummetal involved in making cannons. This went on until I had to visit India on business. I was greatly struck by these figures, especially as they were quite new ; for I had enough waste metal here to supply all India with them I found they were made in a certain place by a certain set of native workmen, and nowhere else I went to that place and bought up the whole concern, workmen and all. The wages I offered were of course far beyond anything they had ever dreamt of I promised them a temple as well you are now in it. Sometimes, when my nerves are overwrought I come in here and sit for an hour before this shrine while a priest recites prayers in a language of which I do not understand one word It soothes me as nothing else does This Jain religion is far ahead of anything we have in the west

STEPHEN You mean, I presume, except the Church of England

UNDERSHAFT. We have two a Protestant Low Church and an Anglican Ritualist But somehow I never go into them.

LADY BRITOMART Andrew: you grow wickeder and wickeder
Children come away at once. There is some uncanny magic about this place : that figure will convert us all to Indian idolatry if we stay here any longer. Come

She leads the way out. They follow reluctantly
Exterior of the Shinto temple. The party as before

UNDERSHAFT This is where our Japanese experts worship.

MAJOR BARBARA

LOMAX. The Shinto shop ?

UNDERSHAFT. We call it a temple. There is nothing special inside except a priest who will expect you to give him a penny for a stick of incense to burn at the altar.

LADY BRITOMART. I shall most certainly do nothing of the sort. I will not go in.

UNDERSHAFT. You need not. But the temple is politically important to us here.

STEPHEN. How, pray ?

UNDERSHAFT. Well, as Mr Lomax said, it is the temple of the Totalitarian State.

CUSINS. Do not forget that I am a collector of religions, Machiavelli. I happen to know all about Shinto. I know, for instance, that the Shinto Totalitarian State is personified by the divine emperor, descended from the sun, who owns everything.

UNDERSHAFT. Precisely.

CUSINS. Then does the Japanese Mikado own everything here ?

UNDERSHAFT. No. I own everything here. As a founding I may be descended from the sun. At all events I am the divine emperor.

LADY BRITOMART. Oh, this is beyond bearing. Andrew : I cannot breathe here. I must get back to some part of England where you don't own everything, and where everyone knows that you are a vulgar tradesman and not a divine emperor. Children come away at once.

STEPHEN. I think not, mother. I will see this thing through.

CUSINS. I confess to being enormously amused. The discovery of Machiavelli as a divine emperor was worth living for.

LOMAX. Well, I can't help feeling that there is a certain amount of tosh about this last Shinto touch. I am not saying anything against it, you know.

LADY BRITOMART. You may think it a joke ; but it is no joke to me. I am a Liberal, and without an atmosphere of freedom I suffocate.

BARBARA. It is easy to be a Liberal in Wilton Crescent on a divine emperor's millions. Not so easy at the East End, where women earn tuppence hapenny an hour, and

MAJOR BARBARA

families pay four shillings a week for an attic or a damp cellar to live in I have seen enough of the toy temples where Indians worship you Shew me where our own people live, and where they worship God

UNDERSHAFT I have reserved that for the last, my dear. We shall finish up with the places where the workers own everything, and I own nothing You shall see how they live in their own houses, buy at their own shops, eat at their own restaurants, amuse themselves in their own theatres, and send their children to their own schools It makes it very difficult for them to leave my employment. But then they do not want to leave it

LADY BRITOMART. Slavery, I call it

UNDERSHAFT You would, my dear But there is plenty of your pet political freedom here Let me shew you

They pass on to the Labor Church

LADY BRITOMART What is written up there round the top ?

CUSINS "No man is good enough to be another man's master" A famous maxim of William Morris, a great poet, a great communist, a great craftsman, and a great manufacturer I still buy his curtains and wall-papers I cannot afford his printed books They cost hundreds

LADY BRITOMART Then he was also a very great hypocrite Not good enough to be another man's master ! He was everyman's master I remember him quite well He wore a blue shirt and no tie

They go in

The Labor Church, pillared and roofed like a church, has a platform instead of an altar, and a vast organ over it Busts in all directions of the heroes and heroines of Labor

UNDERSHAFT Here are all the great revolutionists and socialists for you That is Morris himself in the middle before the platform Saint William of Kelmscott they call him And all the rest Robert Owen, Marx and Engels and Ferdinand Lassalle, Wells and Shaw and the Webbs, Hyndman and Cunninghame Graham and Kropotkin, Tolstoy and some new Russians called Bolsheviks all of them the reddest of Reds Revolutionary

MAJOR BARBARA

agitators draw the largest audiences here they are usually the best speakers I seldom speak in public , but when I do I speak here

STEPHEN But do you allow seditious speeches to be made here ?

UNDERSHAFT Of course that is what the place is for It is the Undershaft safety valve Our people can talk here , and as long as men can talk politics they will never do anything else except work for their daily bread

BARBARA May I hold a prayer meeting here ?

UNDERSHAFT If you like But there are Salvation barracks available You will get a better attendance in them

LOMAX This place must cost a lot of money Have you to pay for it ?

UNDERSHAFT It pays for itself There is a charge for admission at our concerts

SARAH Have you an orchestra

UNDERSHAFT We have the best orchestra in the world, and the best conductors, and the best singers We pay them handsomely for one performance, which we televise and record so that we can reproduce it as often as we like

LOMAX I say could you give us a spot of it now ?

UNDERSHAFT Yes I have had my favorite record put in ready for you The announcer will explain Let us sit in this row it is the best for hearing

They do so

UNDERSHAFT You will find a switch at the back of the seat in front of you Push it over to the right

LADY BRITOMART [*fingering it*] This one ?

UNDERSHAFT Yes Dont be afraid it wont hurt you

Lady Britomart pushes the switch over Instantly the empty platform becomes an orchestra of a hundred performers in evening dress tuning their instruments Behind them is the chorus, a small body of good singers, not a mob of amateurs In front are seated four principal singers The conductor's desk is vacant The announcer comes on, and with a gesture signals to the band for silence The tuning stops

MAJOR BARBARA

ANNOUNCER What you are about to hear is a fragment from a dead opera by the Italian composer Giacomo Rossini, who in Europe a hundred years ago ranked as high as Handel in our own country. The subject is the miraculous passage through the Red Sea by the Israelites in their flight from Egypt.

But nowadays this has no appeal to our own destiny and our own troubles, consequently no importance for us. To make it live again we have interpreted the Red Sea as a symbol of the Socialist revolution on which our most glorious hopes and our deadliest fears are fixed. In the same agonizing throes of faith, hope, and terror must Moses have confronted the waves of the mighty sea that raged between his people and the promised land. We have not altered a note of the music: we have only given it such a wealth of orchestration as Rossini would himself have given it had the great resources of Undershaft and Lazarus been within his reach. The words alone are brought up to date. For Rossini at his greatest today there is only one conductor: Arturo Toscanini.

Toscanini enters, baton in hand, and takes his place at the conductor's desk

ANNOUNCER Ladies and gentlemen Arturo Toscanini.
[He leaves the platform]

Toscanini raises his baton; and the quartet and chorus from Rossini's Moses in Egypt follows, accompanied by the Wagnerian orchestra. At the famous modulation into G major the organ is added. The words are as follows

RECITATIVE AND CHORUS

BASS SOLO	In this our hour of darkness We warsmiths of the cannons Where do we stand today?
CHORUS.	We forge our own destruction We shall be slain who slay.
BASS SOLO	Then from the gods who fail us Ourselves must win the sway

I

QUARTET AND CHORUS

BASS SOLO O thou great soul of all :
 Say where but here within us
 The answer to our call
 Shall we, thy servants, find ?

CHORUS Say where but here within us
 Shall we the answer find ?

SOLO QUARTET Say where ?

CHORUS In ourselves

II

TENOR SOLO Shall we not then arise
 And in our hearts the power
 We sought for in the skies
 Find ready to our hands ?

CHORUS In heart and brain discover
 The godhead in our hands

SOLO QUARTET Where else ?

CHORUS In our hands

III

SOPRANO SOLO From Women's tortured hearts
 Their slaughtered sons lamenting
 I cry against these arts
 That slay what we create.

CHORUS Creation, not destruction,
 Shall henceforth make us great.

SOLO QUARTET Dare we hope ?

CHORUS Yes we dare

IV

Soloists and Chorus with Organ ad lib.

ALL To thee the god within us
 We trust the world to win us
 Creation, not destruction,
 Henceforth shall make us great

SOPRANO SOLO Us great

CHORUS Henceforth

MAJOR BARBARA

The players and singers vanish, leaving the platform empty as before

UNDERSHAFT Well? what did you think of it?

LADY BRITOMART I loathed it My mother used to play Thalberg's variations on that air, and she tried to force me to learn them too I have hated music ever since

LOMAX 'I could hear that it was classical music It made a devil of a noise

UNDERSHAFT [*rising*] Come! it is time for lunch you must all be hungry

They all rise eagerly and make for the door

LADY BRITOMART I hope we can depend on your cookery, Andrew

UNDERSHAFT You shall have what my workers eat

LADY BRITOMART [*stopping*] Is there nothing better here, Andrew?

UNDERSHAFT There is nothing better anywhere Do not be afraid Come!

*A park surrounding a colossal modern forty storey mansion
The party arrives at the entrance in its cars, and alights there*

LOMAX Is this part of the show?

UNDERSHAFT It is part of the show It is where our younger workers prefer to live The young wives insist on service flats, though we have plenty of bungalows for them

BARBARA Service flats! Do you mean that the young women don't know how to cook and wash and do their own housework?

UNDERSHAFT Not at all. They have been most thoroughly and carefully taught how to do every kind of domestic work The result is that nothing will induce them to do it They know too much about it They prefer to earn wages in the workshops and be waited on by professional servants when they go home

LADY BRITOMART I'll stop my subscription to the Domestic

MAJOR BARBARA

Training Institution at once I never heard of such a thing

They go in In the entrance hall there are several automatic lifts one marked EXPRESS Undershaft presses the button of the Express lift, which comes down

UNDERSHAFT You'll lunch on the thirty-second floor [*he opens the grill of the lift, and ushers them in*]

The lift ascends When they leave it, Undershaft conducts them to a handsome salon with big windows A table is ready for lunch with a luxurious display of linen and silver and flowers

LADY BRITOMART [*surveying the table critically*] The table is laid for five only We are six

UNDERSHAFT You forget, my love, that I don't lunch It is a modern habit I have never been able to acquire A penny roll and a glass of milk in my office is enough for me I must leave you now for an hour or so to see after my office business It will be a relief for you to get rid of me for a while

ALL EXCEPT BARBARA AND LADY BRITOMART [*politely murmuring*] Oh no Not at all

BARBARA [*explosively*] Yes it will We can't talk about all these upsetting things in front of you I want an hour's respite and some food

UNDERSHAFT You shall have both, my love But first let me shew you where my older workpeople live You can see it all from this window

They crowd to the window he indicates

The view from the window is of a green valley dotted with bungalows of various design each with its verandah and garden

LOMAX Garden city notion, what?

UNDERSHAFT They call it a garden suburb I'm sorry to say they are all incorrigible snobs You must be careful what you say when they are listening Now if you'll come to this window you'll see where to find me in my own office

They move expectantly to the opposite window It commands a view of an ancient slag heap, now an apparently natural

MAJOR BARBARA

hill dotted with separate wooden sheds, and surmounted by a parapet and firestep on which is mounted an obsolete black cannon, short in the barrel and thick in the breech, without ornament of any kind

UNDERSHAFT That is where we handle high explosives. Any of those sheds may blow up at any moment. An explosion costs nothing but a shed and perhaps a casualty or two. The hill is called Thundercrest; it is the oldest part of the concern, and the Undershafes still like to do a good deal of their business there in the old shed that was meant for the clerk of the works. I leave the official bureau with its filing cabinets and board room and luxurious furniture and carpets and so on to Lazarus, who thoroughly enjoys them. I am more at home in the shed.

SARAH What's the big black thing peeping over the wall at the top?

UNDERSHAFT That old thing is the gun that made me famous. It was called the Woolwich Infant; but it was designed by me and made by me. It is a sort of keepsake, one of the few things I am really sentimental about. That is where you'll find me when you have finished here. The chauffeur will drive you over. Remember the name. Thundercrest. [*He goes out*]

CUSINS I am rather impressed by the possibility of any of those sheds blowing up at any moment. It has a horrible fascination for me, but I think I shall take Barbara home first.

LADY BRITOMART You had better all go home. But I shall stay. I had rather be blown to bits than let Andrew think he has frightened me.

SARAH Your sentiments are mine, respected parent.

BARBARA [*very emphatically*] AND mine.

Lunch is brought in.

BARBARA At last. Grub.

All except Lady Britomart rush hungrily to seat themselves at table, anyhow.

LADY BRITOMART Don't rush, children. Really, you are picking up your father's manners already. [*She takes*

MAJOR BARBARA

*the head of the table with dignity]
They all eat greedily, exhausted by the wonders of Undershaft
and Lazarus.*

Thundercrest A gun emplacement along the ridge of the hill, with the old fat black cannon (the Woolwich Infant) in the middle, aiming southward over a firestep which fortifies the whole length of the emplacement and is evidently much older than the cannon. On the grey masonry of its breastwork are slate panels with incised inscriptions, illegible except at close quarters. In utmost contrast to the ultra-modernity and fresh paint of the model factory town hidden on the far side of the hill, Thundercrest is centuries old. It is used only as a dumping place for junk. Old ammunition boxes, handy for visitors to sit on, abound. The quaintest objects are lifesize dummy soldiers in early Victorian uniforms, lying about anyhow and anywhere in their red coats, cockaded peaked headgear, epaulets, and belts on which the pipe-clay has long lost its lustre. Many of them have suffered gaping grapeshot wounds from which their straw entrails protrude grotesquely. One of them, fearfully gashed across the abdomen, has fallen in front of a very unimposing old brick edifice at the west end of the emplacement, with the word MANAGER over the door in the ugliest pre-Morrisian lettering. At the opposite end is one of the shabby old huts with which the hill is dotted. It is raised on posts and entered by a flight of wooden steps. The door is labelled DANGER in red! Near the cannon is a new-looking modern shell with a red band painted on it.

The visiting party arrives, looking with some wonder at the prevailing disorder and decay.

Undershaft comes from the office, with a sheaf of telegrams in his hand.

UNDERSHAFT. Well, have you seen everything? I'm sorry I was called away. [*Indicating the telegrams*] Good news from the front.

MAJOR BARBARA

STEPHEN Another victory ?

UNDERSHAFT Oh, I dont know Which side wins does not concern us here No the good news is that the aerial battleship is a tremendous success At the first trial it has wiped out a fort with three hundred soldiers in it
[he pockets the telegrams]

CUSINS *[from the platform]* Dummy soldiers ?

UNDERSHAFT *[striding across to Stephen and kicking the dis-emboweled dummy out of his way]* No the real thing
Cusins and Barbara exchange glances Then Cusins sits on the step and buries his face in his hands Barbara gravely lays her hand on his shoulder He looks up at her in whimsical desperation

UNDERSHAFT Well, Stephen, what do you think of the place ?

STEPHEN Oh, magnificent A perfect triumph of modern industry Frankly, my dear father, I have been a fool I had no idea of what it all meant of the wonderful forethought, the power of organization, the administrative capacity, the financial genius, the colossal capital it represents I have been repeating to myself as I came through your streets "Peace hath her victories no less renowned than War" I have only one misgiving about it all

UNDERSHAFT Out with it

STEPHEN Well, I cannot help thinking that all this provision for every want of your workmen may sap their independence and weaken their sense of responsibility Are you sure so much pampering is really good for the men's characters ?

UNDERSHAFT Well you see, my dear boy, when you are organizing civilization you have to make up your mind whether trouble and anxiety are good things or not If you decide that they are, then, I take it, you simply dont organize civilization, and there you are, with trouble and anxiety enough to make us all angels ! But if you decide the other way, you may as well go through with it However, Stephen, our characters are safe here A sufficient dose of anxiety is always provided by the fact that we may be blown to smithereens at any moment

MAJOR BARBARA

At the same moment the door of the shed is thrown abruptly open , and a foreman in overalls and list slippers comes out on the little landing and holds the door for Lomax, who appears in the doorway

LOMAX [*with studied coolness*] My good fellow you neednt get into a state of nerves Nothing's going to happen to you , and I suppose it wouldnt be the end of the world if anything did A little bit of British pluck is what you want, old chap [*He descends and strolls across to Sarah*]

UNDERSHAFT [*to the foreman*] Anything wrong, Bilton ?

BILTON [*with ironic calm*] Gentleman walked into the high explosives shed and lit a cigaret, sir . thats all

UNDERSHAFT Ah, quite so [*Going over to Lomax*] Do you happen to remember what you did with the match ?

LOMAX Oh come ! I'm not a fool I took jolly good care to blow it out before I chucked it away

BILTON The top of it was red hot inside, sir

LOMAX Well, suppose it was ! I didn't chuck it into any of your messes

UNDERSHAFT Think no more of it, Mr Lomax By the way, would you mind lending me your matches

LOMAX [*offering his box*] Certainly

UNDERSHAFT Thanks. [*He pockets the matches*]

LOMAX [*lecturing to the company generally*] You know, these high explosives dont go off like gunpowder, except when theyre in a gun When theyre spread loose, you can put a match to them without the least risk they just burn quietly like a bit of paper [*Warming to the scientific interest of the subject*] Did you know that, Mr Undershaft ? Have you ever tried ?

UNDERSHAFT Not on a large scale, Mr Lomax Bilton will give you a sample of gun cotton when you are leaving if you ask him You can experiment with it at home [*Bilton looks puzzled*]

SARAH Bilton will do nothing of the sort, papa I suppose it's your business to blow up our enemies , but you might at least stop short of blowing up poor Cholly [*Bilton gives it up and retires into the shed*]

MAJOR BARBARA

LOMAX My ownest, there is no danger [*He sits beside her on the shell*]

LADY BRITOMART. Andrew . you shouldnt have let me see this place. To think of it being yours ! and that you have kept it to yourself all these years !

UNDERSHAFT It does not belong to me I belong to it It is the Undershaft inheritance

LADY BRITOMART. It is not Your cannons and chemicals may be the Undershaft inheritance , but the estate belongs to us I wont give it up I dont ask it any longer for Stephen—

STEPHEN [*interrupting her sharply*] I have not asked for it myself The place is wonderful , but there is a Stevenage tradition as well as an Undershaft one. My future is in the Cabinet or Foreign Office, not in the counting house

LADY BRITOMART And leave Barbara to starve ! Why should not Adolphus succeed to the inheritance ? I could manage the town for him , and he can look after the cannons, if they are really necessary.

UNDERSHAFT I should ask nothing better if Adolphus were a foundling He is exactly the sort of new blood that is wanted in English business Unfortunately he's not a foundling [*He makes for the office door*]

CUSINS. How do you know ? [*They all turn and stare at him*]. I think—Mind ! I am not committing myself in any way as to my future course—but I think the foundling difficulty can be got over.

UNDERSHAFT What do you mean ?

CUSINS. Well, I have something to say which is in the nature of a confession.

SARAH.

LADY BRITOMART.

BARBARA

STEPHEN

LOMAX. Oh I say !

CUSINS. Yes, a confession. Listen, all. Until I met Barbara I thought myself in the main an honorable, truthful man, because I wanted the approval of my conscience

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more than I wanted anything else But the moment I saw Barbara, I wanted her far more than the approval of my conscience

LADY BRITOMART Adolphus !

CUSINS It is true You accused me yourself, Lady Brit, of joining the Army to worship Barbara , and so I did She bought my soul like a flower at a street corner , but she bought it for herself.

UNDERSHAFT What ! Not for Dionysos or another ?

CUSINS Dionysos and all the others are in herself I adored what was divine in her, and was therefore a true worshipper But I was romantic about her too. I thought she was a woman of the people, and that a marriage with a professor of Greek would be far beyond the wildest social ambitions of her rank.

LADY BRITOMART. Adolphus ! !

LOMAX Oh I say ! ! !

CUSINS When I learnt the horrible truth—

LADY BRITOMART What do you mean by the horrible truth, pray ?

CUSINS. That she was enormously rich , that her grandfather was an earl , that her father was the Prince of Darkness—

UNDERSHAFT Chut !

CUSINS —and that I was only an adventurer trying to catch a rich wife, then I stooped to deceive her about my birth

BARBARA [*rising*] Dolly !

LADY BRITOMART. Your birth ! Now Adolphus, dont dare to make up a wicked story for the sake of these wretched cannons. Remember . I have seen photographs of your parents , and the Agent General for South Western Australia knows them personally and has assured me that they are most respectable married people

CUSINS. Their marriage was legal in Australia, but not in England My mother is my father's deceased wife's sister , and in this island I was consequently a foundling [*Sensation*]

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STEPHEN But such marriages have been made legal in England

CUSINS Not until I was grown up I was born and bred a bastard That is all the tradition requires What do you say, Machiavelli ?

UNDERSHAFT You are an educated man That is against the tradition

CUSINS Once in ten thousand times it happens that the schoolboy is a born master of what they try to teach him Greek has not destroyed my mind it has nourished it Besides, I did not learn it at an English public school

UNDERSHAFT Hm ! Well, I cannot afford to be too particular you have cornered the foundling market Let it pass You are eligible, Euripides you are eligible.

BARBARA Dolly yesterday morning, when Stephen told us all about the tradition, you became very silent, and you have been strange and excited ever since Were you thinking of your birth then ?

CUSINS When the finger of Destiny suddenly points at a man in the middle of his breakfast, it makes him thoughtful

UNDERSHAFT Aha ! You have had your eye on the business, my young friend, have you ?

CUSINS Take care ! There is an abyss of moral horror between me and your accursed aerial battleships

UNDERSHAFT Never mind the abyss for the present Let us settle the practical details and leave your final decision open You know that you will have to change your name Do you object to that ?

CUSINS Would any man named Adolphus—any man called Dolly !—object to be called something else ?

UNDERSHAFT. Good Now, as to money ! I propose to treat you handsomely from the beginning. You shall start at a thousand a year

CUSINS [*with sudden heat, his spectacles twinkling with mischief*] A thousand ! You dare offer a miserable thousand to the son-in-law of a millionaire ! No, by Heavens, Machiavelli ! you shall not sweat me You

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cannot do without me , and I can do without you
I must have two thousand five hundred a year for two
years At the end of that time, if I am a failure, I go
But if I am a success, and stay on, you must give me
the other five thousand

UNDERSHAFT What other five thousand ?

CUSINS To make the two years up to five thousand a year.
The two thousand five hundred is only half pay in
case I should turn out a failure The third year I must
have ten per cent on the profits.

UNDERSHAFT [*taken aback*] Ten per cent ! Why, man, do
you know what my profits are ?

CUSINS Enormous, I hope otherwise I shall require
twentyfive per cent

UNDERSHAFT But, Mr Cusins, this is a serious matter of
business You are not bringing any capital into the
concern

CUSINS What ! no capital ! Is my mastery of Greek no
capital ? Is my access to the subtlest thought, the
loftiest poetry yet attained by humanity, no capital ?
My character ! my intellect ! my life ! my career !
what Barbara calls my soul ! are these no capital ?
Say another word , and I double my salary

UNDERSHAFT Be reasonable—

CUSINS [*peremptorily*] Mr Undershaft you have my terms
Take them or leave them

UNDERSHAFT [*recovering himself*] Very well I note your
terms , and I offer you half

CUSINS [*disgusted*] Half !

UNDERSHAFT [*firmly*] Half

CUSINS You call yourself a gentleman , and you offer me
half ! !

UNDERSHAFT. I do not call myself a gentleman , but I offer
you half

CUSINS This to your future partner ! your successor ! your
son-in-law !

BARBARA You are selling your own soul, Dolly, not mine
Leave me out of the bargain, please

UNDERSHAFT. Come ! I will go a step further for Barbara's

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sake I will give you three fifths , but that is my last word

CUSINS Done !

LOMAX. Done in the eye ! Why, *I* get only eight hundred, you know

CUSINS By the way, Mac, I am a classical scholar, not a mathematical one Is three fifths more than half or less ?

UNDERSHAFT More, of course

CUSINS I would have taken two hundred and fifty How you can succeed in business when you are willing to pay all that money to a University don who is obviously not worth a junior clerk's wages !—well ! What will Lazarus say ?

UNDERSHAFT Lazarus is a gentle romantic Jew who cares for nothing but string quartets and stalls at fashionable theatres He will be blamed for your rapacity in money matters, poor fellow ! as he has hitherto been blamed for mine. You are a shark of the first order, Euripides So much the better for the firm !

BARBARA Is the bargain closed, Dolly ? Does your soul belong to him now ?

CUSINS. No . the price is settled that is all The real tug of war is still to come What about the moral question ?

LADY BRITOMART There is no moral question in the matter at all, Adolphus You must simply sell cannons and weapons to people whose cause is right and just, and refuse them to foreigners and criminals.

UNDERSHAFT [*determinedly*] No none of that You must keep the true faith of an Armorer, or you dont come in here

CUSINS What on earth is the true faith of an Armorer ?

UNDERSHAFT To give arms to all men who offer an honest price for them, without respect of persons or principles : to Royalist and Republican, to Communist and Capitalist, to Protestant and Catholic, to burglar and policeman, to black man white man and yellow man, to all sorts and conditions, all nationalities, all faiths,

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all follies, all causes and all crimes. Have you read these letters cut into the wall behind you ? They are the last words of the wisdom of the UndershafTs since their beginnings on this spot Here is the first : IF GOD GAVE THE HAND, LET NOT MAN WITHHOLD THE SWORD. The second : ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO FIGHT : NONE HAVE THE RIGHT TO JUDGE The third · TO MAN THE WEAPON TO HEAVEN THE VICTORY. The fourth had no literary turn ; so he wrote nothing , but he sold cannons to Napoleon under the nose of George the Third. The fifth · PEACE SHALL NOT PREVAIL SAVE WITH A SWORD IN HER HAND The sixth, my master, was the best of all NOTHING IS EVER DONE IN THIS WORLD UNTIL MEN ARE PREPARED TO KILL ONE ANOTHER IF IT IS NOT DONE After that, there was nothing left for me to say So I shall write up, simply, UNASHAMED CUSINS. My good Machiavelli, I shall certainly write something up on the wall , only, as I shall write it in Greek, you wont be able to read it But as to your Armorer's faith, if I take my neck out of the noose of my own morality I am not going to put it into the noose of yours I shall sell cannons to whom I please and refuse them to whom I please. So there !

UNDERSHAFT. From the moment when you become Andrew Undershafft, you will never do as you please again Dont come here lusting for power, young man.

CUSINS. If power were my aim I should not come here for it. You have no power

UNDERSHAFT. None of my own, certainly

CUSINS. I have more power than you, more will. You do not drive this place it drives you. And what drives the place ?

UNDERSHAFT [*enigmatically*] A will of which I am a part

BARBARA [*startled*] Father ! Do you know what you are saying ? or are you laying a snare for my soul ?

CUSINS. Dont listen to his metaphysics, Barbara. The place is driven by Capitalist money hunters , and he is their slave

UNDERSHAFT Not necessarily Remember the Armorer's Faith. I will take an order from a good man as cheer-

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fully as from a bad one If you good people prefer preaching and shirking to buying my weapons and fighting the money hunters, dont blame me I can make cannons I cannot make courage and conviction Bah ! you tire me, Euripides, with your morality mongering Ask Barbara she understands [*He takes Barbara's hands, looking powerfully into her eyes*] Tell him, my love, what power really means

BARBARA [*hypnotized*] Before I joined the Salvation Army, I was in my own power , and the consequence was that I never knew what to do with myself When I joined it, I had not time enough for all the things I had to do

UNDERSHAFT [*approvingly*] Just so. And why was that, do you suppose ?

BARBARA Yesterday I should have said, because I was in the power of God [*She withdraws her hands from his with a power equal to his own*] But you came and shewed me that I was in the power of Bodger and Undershaft Today I feel—oh ! how can I put it into words ? Sarah do you remember the earthquake at Cannes, when we were little children ?—how little the surprise of the first shock mattered compared to the dread and horror of waiting for the second ? That is how I feel in this place today I stood on the rock I thought eternal , and without a word of warning it reeled and crumbled under me I was safe with an infinite wisdom watching me, an army marching to Salvation with me , and in a moment, at a stroke of your pen in your cheque book, I stood alone , and the heavens were empty. That was the first shock of the earthquake I am waiting for the second

UNDERSHAFT Come, come, my daughter ! dont make too much of your little tinpot tragedy What do we do here when we spend years of work and thought and thousands of pounds of solid cash on a new gun or an aerial battleship that turns out just a hairsbreadth wrong after all ? Scrap it Scrap it without wasting another hour or another pound on it Well, you have

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made for yourself something that you call a morality or a religion or what not It doesnt fit the facts Well, scrap it Scrap it and get one that does fit That is what is wrong with the world at present It scraps its obsolete steam engines and dynamos , but it wont scrap its old prejudices and its old moralities and its old religions and its old political constitutions Whats the result? In machinery it does very well , but in morals and religion and politics it is working at a loss that brings it nearer bankruptcy every year Dont persist in that folly If your old religion broke down yesterday, get a newer and a better one for tomorrow

BARBARA Oh how gladly I would take a better one to my soul ! But you offer me a worse one [*Turning on him with sudden vehemence*] Justify yourself shew me some light through the darkness of this dreadful place, with its beautifully clean workshops, and respectable workmen, and model homes

UNDERSHAFT Cleanliness and respectability do not need justification, Barbara . they justify themselves I see no darkness here, no dreadfulness In your Salvation shelter I saw poverty, misery, cold and hunger You gave them bread and treacle and dreams of heaven I give from three pound ten a week to twelve thousand a year They find their own dreams , but I look after the drainage

BARBARA And their souls ?

UNDERSHAFT I save their souls just as I saved yours

BARBARA You saved my soul ! What do you mean ?

UNDERSHAFT I fed you and clothed you and housed you I took care that you should have money enough to live handsomely—more than enough , so that you could be wasteful, careless, generous That saved your soul from the seven deadly sins

BARBARA [*bewildered*] The seven deadly sins !

UNDERSHAFT Yes, the deadly seven [*Counting on his fingers*] Food, clothing, firing, rent, taxes, respectability and children Nothing can lift those seven millstones from Man's neck but money , and the spirit cannot

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soar until the millstones are lifted. I lifted them from your spirit I enabled Barbara to become Major Barbara, and I saved her from the crime of poverty

CUSINS Do you call poverty a crime?

UNDERSHAFT. The worst of crimes Poverty blights whole cities, spreads horrible pestilences, strikes dead the very souls of all who come within sight, sound, or smell of it What you call crime is nothing a murder here and a theft there, a blow now and a curse then what do they matter? they are only the accidents and illnesses of life. there are not fifty genuine professional criminals in London But there are millions of poor people, abject people, dirty people, sick people, ignorant people, ill fed, ill clothed people, poisoning us, forcing us to organize unnatural cruelties for fear they should rise against us and drag us down into their abyss. Only fools fear crime we all fear poverty Pah! [*turning to Barbara*] you talk of your half-saved ruffian in West Ham you accuse me of dragging his soul back to perdition Well, bring him to me here, and I will drag his soul back again to salvation for you Not by words and dreams, but by three pound ten the five day week, a sound house in a healthy street, and a permanent job In three weeks he will have a bowler hat and a chapel sitting: before the end of the year he will shake hands with a duchess at a Primrose League meeting, and join the Conservative Party

BARBARA. And will he be the better for that?

UNDERSHAFT You know he will Dont be a hypocrite, Barbara. He will be better fed, better housed, better clothed, better behaved, and his children will be pounds heavier and bigger That will be better than an American cloth mattress in a shelter, chopping firewood, eating bread and treacle, and being forced to kneel down from time to time to thank heaven for it. knee drill, I think you call it. It is cheap work converting starving men with a Bible in one hand and a slice of bread in the other. I will undertake to convert West Ham to Mahometanism on the same

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terms. Try your hand on my men . their souls are hungry because their bodies are full

BARBARA. And leave the east end to starve ?

UNDERSHAFT [*his energetic tone dropping into one of bitter and brooding remembrance*] I was an east ender I moralized and starved until one day I swore that I would be a full-fed free man at all costs , that nothing should stop me except a bullet, neither reason nor morals nor the lives of other men I said " Thou shalt starve ere I starve " , and with that word I became free and great I was a dangerous man until I had my will : now I am a useful, beneficent, kindly person. That is the history of most self-made millionaires, I fancy. When it is the history of every Englishman we shall have an England worth living in

LADY BRITOMART Stop making speeches, Andrew. This is not the place for them.

UNDERSHAFT [*punctured*] My dear I have no other means of conveying my ideas

LADY BRITOMART Your ideas are nonsense You got on because you were selfish and unscrupulous

UNDERSHAFT Not at all I had the strongest scruples about poverty and starvation Your moralists are quite unscrupulous about both : they make virtues of them I had rather be a thief than a pauper I had rather be a murderer than a slave I dont want to be either , but if you force the alternative on me, then, by Heaven, I'll choose the braver and more moral one I hate poverty and slavery worse than any other crimes whatsoever And let me tell you this Poverty and slavery have stood up for centuries to your sermons and speeches and leading articles they will not stand up to my machine guns Dont preach at them dont reason with them Kill them

BARBARA Killing Is that your remedy for everything ?

UNDERSHAFT It is the final test of conviction, the only lever strong enough to overturn a social system, the only way of saying Must Let six hundred and seventy fools loose in the streets , and three policemen can

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scatter them But huddle them together in a chamber in Westminster, and let them go through certain ceremonies and call themselves certain names until at last they get the courage to kill, and your six hundred and seventy fools become a government Your pious mob fills up ballot papers and imagines it is governing its masters, but the ballot paper that really governs is the paper that has a bullet wrapped up in it

CUSINS That is perhaps why, like most intelligent people, I never vote

UNDERSHAFT Vote! Bah! When you vote, you only change the names of the Cabinet When you shoot, you pull down governments, inaugurate new epochs, abolish old orders and set up new Is that historically true, Mr Learned Man, or is it not?

CUSINS It is historically true I loathe having to admit it. I repudiate your sentiments I abhor your nature I defy you in every possible way Still, it is true But it ought not to be true.

UNDERSHAFT Ought! ought! ought! ought! ought! Are you going to spend your life saying ought, like the rest of our moralists? Turn your oughts into shalls, man Come and make explosives with me Whatever can blow men up can blow society up The history of the world is the history of those who had courage enough to embrace this truth Have you the courage to embrace it, Barbara?

LADY BRITOMART Barbara I positively forbid you to listen to your father's abominable wickedness And you, Adolphus, ought to know better than to go about saying that wrong things are true What does it matter whether they are true if they are wrong?

UNDERSHAFT What does it matter whether they are wrong if they are true?

LADY BRITOMART Children come home instantly Andrew I am exceedingly sorry I allowed you to call on us You are wickedder than ever Come at once

BARBARA [*shaking her head*] It's no use running away from wicked people, mamma

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LADY BRITOMART It is every use It shews your disapprobation of them

BARBARA It does not save them

LADY BRITOMART I see that you are going to disobey me.

Sarah are you coming home or are you not ?

SARAH I daresay it's very wicked of papa to make cannons, but I dont think I shall cut him on that account.

LOMAX [*pouring oil on the troubled waters*] The fact is, you know, there is a certain amount of tosh about this notion of wickedness It doesnt work You must look at facts Not that I would say a word in favor of anything wrong, but then, you see, all sorts of chaps are always doing all sorts of things, and we have to fit them in somehow, dont you know What I mean is that you cant go cutting*everybody, and thats about what it comes to [*Their rapt attention to his eloquence makes him nervous*] Perhaps I dont make myself clear

LADY BRITOMART You are lucidity itself, Charles Because Andrew is successful and has plenty of money to give to Sarah, you will flatter him and encourage him in his wickedness.

LOMAX [*unruffled*] Well, where the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered, dont you know [*To Undershaft*] Eh ? What ?

UNDERSHAFT Precisely By the way, may I call you Charles ?

LOMAX Delighted Cholly is the usual ticket

UNDERSHAFT [*to Lady Britomart*] Biddy—

LADY BRITOMART [*violently*] Dont dare call me Biddy Charles Lomax. you are a fool Adolphus Cusins. you are a Jesuit Stephen you are a prig Sarah you are a nonentity Barbara you are a lunatic Andrew you are a vulgar tradesman Now you all know my opinion, and my conscience is clear, at all events [*she sits down on an ammunition box with a vehemence that almost splits it*]

UNDERSHAFT My dear you are the incarnation of morality [*She snorts*] Your conscience is clear and your duty done when you have called everybody names.

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Come, Euripides ! it is getting late , and we all want to go home Make up your mind

CUSINS Understand this, you old demon You have me in a horrible dilemma I want Barbara

UNDERSHAFT Like all young men, you greatly exaggerate the difference between one young woman and another.

BARBARA Quite true, Dolly

CUSINS I also want to avoid being a rascal

UNDERSHAFT [*with biting contempt*] You lust for personal righteousness, for self-approval, for what you call a good conscience, for what Barbara calls salvation, for what I call patronizing people who are not so lucky as yourself

CUSINS I do not all the poet in me recoils from being a good man But there are things in me that I must reckon with Pity—

UNDERSHAFT Pity ! The scavenger of misery.

CUSINS Well, love

UNDERSHAFT I know You love the needy and the outcast : you love the oppressed races, the negro, the Indian ryot, the underdog everywhere Do you love the Japanese ? Do you love the French ? Do you love the English ?

CUSINS No Every true Englishman detests the English We are the wickedest nation on earth , and our success is a moral horror

UNDERSHAFT That is what comes of your gospel of love, is it ?

CUSINS May I not love even my father-in-law ?

UNDERSHAFT Who wants your love, man ? By what right do you take the liberty of offering it to me ? I will have your due heed and respect, or I will kill you. But your love ! Damn your impertinence !

CUSINS [*grinning*] I may not be able to control my affections, Mac

UNDERSHAFT You are fencing, Euripides You are weakening your grip is slipping Come ! try your last weapon Pity and love have broken in your hand . forgiveness is still left

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CUSINS No • forgiveness is a beggar's refuge. I am with you there we must pay our debts

UNDERSHAFT Well said Come! you will suit me. Remember the words of Plato

CUSINS Plato! You dare quote Plato to me!

UNDERSHAFT Plato says, my friend, that society cannot be saved until either the Professors of Greek take to making gunpowder, or else the makers of gunpowder become Professors of Greek

CUSINS Oh, tempter! cunning tempter!

UNDERSHAFT Come! choose, man, choose

CUSINS But perhaps Barbara will not marry me if I make the wrong choice

BARBARA Perhaps not

CUSINS [*desperately perplexed*] You hear!

BARBARA Father do you love nobody?

UNDERSHAFT I love my best friend

LADY BRITOMART And who is that, pray?

UNDERSHAFT My bravest enemy. That is the man who keeps me up to the mark

CUSINS You know, the creature is really a sort of poet in his way Suppose he is a great man, after all!

UNDERSHAFT Suppose you stop talking and make up your mind, my young friend

CUSINS But you are driving me against my nature. I hate war

UNDERSHAFT Hatred is the coward's revenge for being intimidated Dare you make war on war? Here are the means Mr Lomax is sitting on them

LOMAX [*springing up*] Oh I say! You dont mean that this thing is loaded, do you? My ownest come off it

SARAH [*sitting placidly on the shell*] If I am to be blown up, the more thoroughly it is done the better Dont fuss, Cholly

LOMAX [*to Undershaft, strongly remonstrant*] Your own daughter, you know!

UNDERSHAFT So I see [*To Cusins*] Well, my friend, may we expect you here at six tomorrow morning?

CUSINS [*firmlly*] Not on any account I will see the whole

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establishment blown up with its own dynamite before
I will get up at five My hours are healthy, rational
hours eleven to five

UNDERSHAFT Come when you please before a week you
will come at six and stay until I turn you out for the sake
of your health [*Calling*] Bilton ! [*He turns to Lady
Britomart, who rises*] My dear let us leave these two
young people to themselves for a moment [*Bilton
appears at the door of the shed*] I am going to take
you through the cordite shed

BILTON [*barring the way*] You cant take anything explosive
in here, sir

LADY BRITOMART What do you mean ? Are you alluding
to me ?

BILTON [*unmoved*] No, maam Mr Undershaft has the other
gentleman's matches in his pocket

LADY BRITOMART [*abruptly*] Oh ! I beg your pardon [*She
goes into the shed*]

UNDERSHAFT Quite right, Bilton, quite right here you are
[*He gives Bilton the box of matches*] Come, Stephen
Come, Charles, Bring Sarah [*He passes into the shed*]
*Bilton opens the box and deliberately drops the matches into
the fire-bucket*

LOMAX Oh ! I say [*Bilton stolidly hands him the empty box*]
Infernal nonsense ! Pure scientific ignorance ! [*He
goes in*]

SARAH Am I all right, Bilton ?

BILTON Youll have to put on list slippers, miss thats all
Weve got em inside [*She goes in*]

STEPHEN [*very seriously to Cusins*] Dolly, old fellow, think.
Think before you decide Do you feel that you are a
sufficiently practical man ? It is a huge undertaking
an enormous responsibility. All this mass of business
will be Greek to you

CUSINS Oh, I think it will be much less difficult than Greek.

STEPHEN Well, I just want to say this before I leave you to
yourselves Dont let anything I have said about right
and wrong prejudice you against this great chance in
life I have satisfied myself that the business is one

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of the highest character [*Emotionally*] I am very proud of my father I— [*Unable to proceed, he presses Cusins' hand and goes hastily into the shed, followed by Bilton*]

Barbara and Cusins, left alone together, look at one another silently

CUSINS Barbara I am going to accept this offer

BARBARA I thought you would

CUSINS You understand, don't you, that I had to decide without consulting you If I had thrown the burden of the choice on you, you would sooner or later have despised me for it

BARBARA Yes I did not want you to sell your soul for me any more than for this inheritance

CUSINS It is not the sale of my soul that troubles me: I have sold it too often to care about that I have sold it for a professorship I have sold it for an income I have sold it to escape being imprisoned for refusing to pay taxes for hangmen's ropes and unjust wars and things that I abhor What is all human conduct but the daily and hourly sale of our souls? What I am now selling it for is neither money nor position nor comfort, but for reality and power

BARBARA You know that you will have no power, and that he has none

CUSINS I know It is not for myself alone I want to make power for the world

BARBARA I want to make power for the world too, but it must be spiritual power

CUSINS I think all power is spiritual these cannons will not go off by themselves I have tried to make spiritual power by teaching Greek But the world can never be really touched by a dead language and a dead civilization The people must have power; and the people cannot have Greek Now the power that is made here can be wielded by all men

BARBARA Power to burn women's houses down and kill their sons and tear their husbands to pieces

CUSINS You cannot have power for good without having

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power for evil too Even mother's milk nourishes murderers as well as heroes This power which only tears men's bodies to pieces has never been so horribly abused as the intellectual power, the imaginative power, the poetic, religious power that can enslave men's souls As a teacher of Greek I gave the rich man an intellectual weapon against the poor man I now want to give the poor man material weapons against the intellectual man I want to arm him against the lawyers, the doctors, the priests, the literary men, the professors, the artists, and the politicians, who, once in authority, are more disastrous and tyrannical than all the fools, rascals, and impostors I want a power simple enough for common men to use, yet strong enough to force the intellectual oligarchy to use its genius for the general good

BARBARA Is there no higher power than that [*pointing to the shell*] ?

CUSINS Yes , but that power can destroy the higher powers just as a tiger can destroy a man . therefore Man must master that power first I admitted this when the Turks and Greeks were last at war My best pupil went out to fight for Hellas My parting gift to him was not a copy of Plato's Republic, but a revolver and a hundred Undershaft cartridges The blood of every Turk he shot—if he shot any—is on my head as well as on Undershaft's That act committed me to this place for ever Your father's challenge has beaten me Dare I make war on war ? I dare I must I will And now, is it all over between us ?

BARBARA [*touched by his evident dread of her answer*] Silly baby Dolly ! How could it be !

CUSINS [*overjoyed*] Then you—you—you— Oh for my drum ! [*He flourishes imaginary drumsticks*]

BARBARA [*angered by his levity*] Take care, Dolly, take care Oh, if only I could get away from you and from father and from it all ! if I could have the wings of a dove and fly away to heaven !

CUSINS And leave me !

MAJOR BARBARA

BARBARA Yes, you, and all the other naughty mischievous children of men But I cant I was happy in the Salvation Army for a moment I escaped from the world into a paradise of enthusiasm and prayer and soul saving, but the moment our money ran short, it all came back to Bodger it was he who saved our people he, and the Prince of Darkness, my papa Undershaft and Bodger their hands stretch everywhere when we feed a starving fellow creature, it is with their bread, because there is no other bread, when we tend the sick, it is in the hospitals they endow, if we turn from the churches they build, we must kneel on the stones of the streets they pave As long as that lasts, there is no getting away from them Turning our backs on Bodger and Undershaft is turning our backs on life

CUSINS I thought you were determined to turn your back on the wicked side of life

BARBARA There is no wicked side life is all one And I never wanted to shirk my share in whatever evil must be endured, whether it be sin or suffering I wish I could cure you of middle-class ideas, Dolly.

CUSINS [*gasping*] Middle cl— ' A snub ' A social snub to me ' from the daughter of a foundling '

BARBARA That is why I have no class, Dolly I come straight out of the heart of the whole people If I were middle-class I should turn my back on my father's business, and we should both live in an artistic drawing room, with you reading the reviews in one corner, and I in the other at the piano, playing Schumann both very superior persons, and neither of us a bit of use Sooner than that, I would sweep out these sheds, or be one of Bodger's barmaids Do you know what would have happened if you had refused papa's offer?

CUSINS I wonder '

BARBARA I should have given you up and married the man who accepted it After all, my dear old mother has more sense than any of you I felt like her when I saw this place—felt that I must have it—that never,

MAJOR BARBARA

never, never could I let it go , only she thought it was the houses and the kitchen ranges and the linen and china, when it was really all the human souls to be saved not weak souls in starved bodies, sobbing with gratitude for a scrap of bread and treacle, but fullfed, quarrelsome, snobbish, uppish creatures, all standing on their little rights and dignities, and thinking that my father ought to be greatly obliged to them for making so much money for him—and so he ought. That is where salvation is really wanted. My father shall never throw it in my teeth again that my converts were bribed with bread. [*She is transfigured*] I have got rid of the bribe of bread. I have got rid of the bribe of heaven. Let God's work be done for its own sake : the work he had to create us to do because it cannot be done except by living men and women. When I die, let him be in my debt, not I in his , and let me forgive him as becomes a woman of my rank.

CUSINS Then the way of life lies through the factory of death ?

BARBARA Yes, through the raising of hell to heaven and of man to God, through the unveiling of an eternal light in the Valley of The Shadow. [*Seizing him with both hands*] Oh, did you think my courage would never come back ? did you believe that I was a deserter ? that I, who have stood in the streets, and taken my people to my heart, and talked of the holiest and greatest things with them, could ever turn back and chatter foolishly to fashionable people about nothing in a drawing room ? Never, never, never, never. Major Barbara will die with the colors. Oh ! and I have my dear little Dolly boy still , and he has found me my place and my work. Glory Hallelujah ! [*She kisses him*]

CUSINS My dearest consider my delicate health. I cannot stand as much happiness as you can.

BARBARA Yes it is not easy work being in love with me, is it ? But it's good for you. [*She runs to the shed, and calls, childlike*] Mamma ! Mamma ! [*Bilton comes*

out of the shed, followed by Undershaft] I want
 Mamma
 UNDERSHAFT She is taking off her list slippers, dear [*He
 passes on to Cusins*] Well? What does she say?
 CUSINS She has gone right up into the skies.
 LADY BRITOMART [*coming from the shed and stopping on the
 steps, obstructing Sarah, who follows with Lomax
 Barbara clutches like a baby at her mother's skirt*]
 Barbara when will you learn to be independent and
 to act and think for yourself? I know as well as
 possible what that cry of "Mamma, Mamma," means
 Always running to me!
 SARAH [*touching Lady Britomart's ribs with her finger tips and
 imitating a bicycle horn*] Pip! pip!
 LADY BRITOMART [*highly indignant*] How dare you say pip
 pip to me, Sarah? You are both very naughty children.
 What do you want, Barbara?
 BARBARA I want a house in the village to live in with Dolly,
 [*Dragging at the skirt*] Come and tell me which one
 to take
 UNDERSHAFT [*to Cusins*] Six o'clock tomorrow morning,
 Euripides.

THE END

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